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THE ♦ OTHER ♦ SIDE.

A SOCIAL STUDY BASED ON FACT.

BY M. A. FORAN.
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When bad men combine the good must associate, else they will fall, one by one, an unpitied sacrifice, in a contemptible struggle."—*Burke*.

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DEDICATION.



TO THE
WORKING MEN AND WOMEN OF AMERICA
THIS WORK
IS RESPECTFULLY INSCRIBED BY THE AUTHOR.

INTRODUCTION.

“*Italiam ! Italiam !*” cried Eneas, as he approached the site of Rome with the venerated images of immortal society, which he carried into exile when Troy was doomed to flames and cinders. Thus from the ashes of Troy, in a new land, society arose, Phoenix like, and with purified splendor made Rome the mistress of the world. And so it has been from the beginning; races have become extinct, nations have disappeared and civilizations have been lost in the gloomy abyss of time; but human society has never perished; from amid the ruins of the monuments of man’s prowess, the destruction of states and the obliteration of races, it has arisen, civilization’s sun, to shine with greater brightness upon new worlds and the reorganized remnants of states and nations. Society existed the moment man was created; it is a fundamental law and the impulse of his moral nature, and is not the offspring of his intelligence—it is of God and not of man. Adam in the morning of his manhood found himself face to face with Eve, a being similar to himself, and in the first hour of their existence, each owed something to the other, and from each there was something due; there were rights to be respected and duties to be performed, and this was society, governed then as now, by two laws, one divine

and immutable, the other human and variable. This pair increased, multiplied and peopled the earth; and in every tribal community, civilized, semi-civilized or barbarous state, from the creation of man until now, this society, in some phase of development, has existed. By reason of man's nature, which is of God, relations are established between men which bind them together in a social state, in which every reasonable being must so regulate his conduct that it will be in harmonious conformity with these relations—hence laws, which Montesquieu says “are the necessary relations which spring from the nature of things,” by which he no doubt meant that because man by nature was capable of great intellectual development, intelligent beings were possible before they existed, and “they had therefore relations, and consequently laws.” This society is governed, as has been said, by two laws—one divine, the other human, or, say, moral and legal; when these laws for any reason come in conflict, society retrogrades; when they are in harmony, it develops and progresses. The improvement in conditions and environment progresses in proportion to the recognition that is given to the proposition: that side by side with the ideal of right, the legal zone, there is the ideal of duty, the moral zone, and the circle of rights is no broader than the circle of duties, and that within these circles of rights and duties exist the necessary relations which bind men together in social compact. The conflict between moral and legal

obligations in the social state is probably due to the instinct of preservation and the instinct of progress, which inheres in society as in individuals. The instinct of progress embraces the future in its hopes and aspirations; it seeks after and welcomes everything which aids in the development of the human mind and the amelioration of material conditions, while the instinct of preservation adheres tenaciously to the past, and fears to trust itself outside the limits of the present; it would sacrifice the person to society, while the instinct of progress would make society aid in the development and advancement of the individual, and while it inculcated respect for every right, it would insist upon the practice of every duty and the cultivation of every faculty of the human mind. From man's observation, stimulated by self-interest in ministering to his wants, civilization arose, and as it is a product of human intellect, its rapid development depends upon the freedom with which man can employ his faculties, and the guarantee that he has that he will be permitted to enjoy the fruits of his labors. When there is no longer any spoliation, direct or indirect, by which the fruits of one man's labor are given to another, social differences will be brought down to the level and be measured by the natural differences which exist between men. Civilization has nothing to fear from the barbarism upon its borders, but much from evolving conditions of ignorance within its domain. For instance, there is the multitude

which may be imbued with chimerical ideas, such as socialism; but this evil quickly disappears when brought within the radius of practical experience. But if society is dominated by a powerful class strongly attached to old abuses, the evil is not so easily dispelled, though, if we are patient, we may safely trust to an enlightened public opinion to correct the wrong. The only obstacles in the great trackway of civilization are anarchy, slavery, and war. The first should give our American society no concern, for the law can and should crush it speedily and summarily. The second is a more complex and difficult problem. The wage system is a species of slavery, in some respects more galling than chattel slavery. The remedy is profit-sharing, equitable participation in the product of labor and capital, and collective ownerships in the great engines of production and agencies of distribution. To call attention to some of the iniquities of the wage system this book was written. Why employers are so generally selfish is due to social causes as much as to individual characteristics. These causes may be surmised by reading this introduction, which is intended as "a rifle shot at the theme." The strict observance by all of the two great laws governing society will bring the circle of duties into such close relationship with the circle of rights, that greater prominence and activity will be given to the instinct of progress, and through its agency old abuses will be broken

down and new and better conditions evolved. Laboring men must remember that the amelioration of their hard lot can only come through society as we find it; that socialism is a chimera, the substitution of a world of fancy for a world of fact, which could only result, if given a trial, in chaos and anarchy and an iron-handed servitude. Capitalists should not forget that man is the chief object of society, and that social order is more dependent upon intelligent, contented, happy citizens than it is upon statutes which the citizen does not respect, because the conditions under which he exists, he believes, are oppressive and cruel. The laborer must learn that through self-effort he can find a way out of wage servitude, and he should never forget that the height to which he can rise in the social scale is only measured by his ambition. In this age Mind is the great law of human destiny, and high intelligence and moral worth the only patents of nobility. The capitalist, often possessed of good and manly instincts, becomes so absorbed, however, in the process of accumulating money that he imagines that he has no time to investigate, consider, or appreciate the beauties or the benefits of Altruism; but the time has come when it is essential to his own interests to take the laborer by the hand and unite with him in an earnest, honest endeavor to fulfill the divine command: "Whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye also to them." M. A. F.

WASHINGTON, MAY 25TH, 1886.

THE OTHER SIDE.

A Dream,

"WHICH WAS NOT ALL A DREAM."

With a sudden start, Mrs. Arbyght awoke from a dream—she thought she stood in the center of a wide, trackless plain, bounded only by the horizon. It was barren and desolate beyond description; vegetation there was none, and the dreary monotony was only broken, here and there, by rocky boulders—barren even of lichen or moss—whose jagged edges were sharply outlined in the clear but arid atmosphere. It was mid-day, and the fierce noon-day sun poured upon the plain its burning, tropical rays, which the white sand and rocks reflected back into the superheated air. In the midst of the plain stood a solitary, leafless, barkless tree. It was dead; its limbs and trunk were dead; alone, in the midst of a lifeless waste of sand and rock, it seemed a veritable, vegetable skeleton. Beneath the dead tree lay a man, fair of face and form and lithe of limb, writhing in the agonies of a premature death.

In his hand was clutched a faded letter, the ink dim with age, and blurred by frequent handling. A torn envelope, old and faded as the letter, lay upon the sand a few feet distant. Upon a high projecting limb of the dead tree sat a grizzled, sharp-beaked vulture. Ever and anon the ill-

omened creature craned its neck and looked furtively and hungrily with its wild, red eyes at the dying man beneath. Suddenly, the sufferer with a quick motion raised the faded letter to his lips, gasped convulsively, quivered for an instant in every muscle, and moved no more. The vulture's eyes glowed in anticipation, his beak parted slightly, his broad wings flapped quickly——when, startled by the horrid, realistic vividness of the vision, the dreamer awoke.

CHAPTER I.

THE OLD HOMESTEAD.

In a medium-sized room, plainly but neatly furnished, in a large frame house in Northeastern Pennsylvania, before a quaintly-carved center table, sat a woman not more than thirty years of age. Her eyes were fixed intently upon an oblong piece of parchment lying before her on the table. Her face, though beautiful to a fault, wore a sad, regretful look, and it was plainly apparent that she was struggling with some deep and powerful emotion. But the look of regret and sadness which clouded her lovely features gradually passed away and was succeeded by one of sweet and tender softness. She raised her head and gazed fondly, with tear-dimmed eyes, at a lithe, but muscular, middle-aged man, who stood leaning against the broad oaken mantel. Wrapped in deep thought, he silently watched the bright birch-wood fire that

blazed and sparkled on the hearth and filled the room with its genial warmth and glow.

The tongue may not move, the eyes may not see, yet heart speaks to heart. The man looked toward the table. His manly, sun-browned face, that had gazed upon the fire in thoughtful mood, now beamed admiration, devotion and love. Husband and wife! Yes; no man but a loving husband and happy father could have looked upon the woman in the center of the room as did Richard Arbyght, and none but a loving and loved wife could have inspired the affection that beamed in his eyes and suffused his whole face with its radiant glow. Still no word was spoken, and the silence was only broken by the measured tick, tick, tick of the old-fashioned New England clock that stood in the corner of the room, extending from floor to ceiling, like a great wooden column.

In order that the reader may comprehend the scene just described, a slight digression is necessary. Seven years previous to the incident which opens our story Richard Arbyght, the hard-working, energetic son of a pioneer merchant in a Western city, while in an Eastern town on business for his father, met the lovely Irene Adair. A purely accidental meeting, it proved life's turning point for each. A mutual attraction led to an acquaintance, and blossomed into a deep, earnest, abiding love, which was solemnized by a marriage sanctioned by the respective parents of both. Shortly after Richard had made the old place his home, Irene lost her parents and had to rely solely upon her husband for consolation as well as protection. Richard loved his wife devotedly, yea, madly, and was made doubly happy by the smiles of two beautiful children, yet he was not at all times cheerful or contented.

His early education, both practical and theoretical, had fitted him for mercantile pursuits, and the measure of his ambition was to be a successful merchant. But knowing so well how strongly attached his wife was to the old place, with all its tender associations, he preferred to bury his longings, to crush the hopes of his boyhood and manhood, and live what was to him an aimless life rather than cause the woman who was so dear to him one single regret. But Irene was a true wife. She saw with a wife's intuitive vision—she divined through that holy influence which permeates and unites in one the souls of two perfect lovers—that her husband had a secret, and she instinctively felt that he kept it from his wife because his love was pure and unselfish.

Richard Arbyght could not deny his wife anything. Therefore when she asked him to share with her the trouble that seemed to shadow him, and make him at times somewhat moody, he did so; although he mentally resolved she should not suffer in the least from the secret she had persuaded him to reveal to her. To more effectually carry out this resolution, he kept strong guard over himself, and took care that neither face nor action should betray him to the watchful eyes of his wife. He appeared cheerful and contented, whether he felt so or not. But his conception of his wife's penetration was very defective. She saw the constant mental struggle in which he was engaged, she read his very soul, and determined that he should not outdo her in self-sacrificing, generous love. She resolved that the old home should be sold, though the bare thought cost her a bitter pang, for it was the rending asunder of affections and ties formed in childhood, and consecrated and made doubly sacred by fifteen years of womanhood.

About this time she accidentally found an open letter from Richard's father, offering him the control and management of a large business house he was then starting in the rapidly-growing city of Chicago. This offer Richard had carefully concealed from her for more than a year, but its discovery at this juncture caused her to renew her exertions to secure a purchaser for the old homestead, and the farm, stock, and all the appurtenances were sold for the sum of fifteen thousand dollars.

The parchment, which Mrs. Arbyght had been so intently regarding, was the deed which her husband had brought home the previous evening, and which she was to sign that morning as soon as Squire Stanley arrived from Silversville, a small village four miles from the farm. Husband and wife were silent, but the silence was soon broken. The door of the room was suddenly burst open and a rosy-cheeked boy, about six years of age, with flashing eye, dilating nostril, and a profusion of raven ringlets, rushed into the room almost screaming in a tone of boyish animation :

"Papa ! Papa ! There's a man on a white horse coming up the road !"

Turning to his mother he went up to her, threw his arms around her neck and kissing her, looked up in an arch manner and, with childish naïvete, said :

"Mamma, may I go out and see him ; he looks so funny ?"

"Yes, dear," said the mother, as she returned the boy's caress.

As the child disappeared and the door closed behind him, Richard advanced to the table and, placing his hand on his wife's shoulder, said :

"Dearest Irene, it is Squire Stanley, who has come to see us about the signing of the deed ; I

fear that my little wife is sacrificing too much for my sake, much more than I deserve, more than I can ever hope to repay."

Arising from her chair, the wife regarded him with the same look of loving devotion that had drawn him out of his reverie a short time before. Putting her arms about his neck, she laid her head upon his breast, and looking up into his eyes said, in a voice tenderly reproachful:

"Richard, you have been a loving, devoted husband to me; for seven long years you have been a voluntary exile for my sake; the sacrifice has all been on your side. I would have given up the old place long ago had I known your wishes in the matter, for my only aim in life is to love you and our dear children, and to make you happy." Richard's answer fell in soft, warm kisses upon the sweet upturned face, and, as Squire Stanley was then heard in the hall, he passed out of the room for a moment to calm his emotion.

CHAPTER II.

WILDCATS.

Squire Stanley was a peculiar character; he was peculiar in his actions, his ideas, his speech and his dress. He was a fair representative of the sturdy, honest, intelligent farmer of thirty-five years ago. He was dressed in a suit of brown homespun, his coat reaching almost to his heels, and buttoned clear up to his chin, his neck wrapped in the folds of a huge home-made comforter, and on

his head was a coon-skin cap of gigantic proportions, from the sides of which hung large earlaps fastened under the chin by a strap; his hands were hidden in woolen mittens covered with black fox skin, and lined with flannel—they resembled boxing gloves; his feet were incased in thick-soled cowhide boots. Thus appareled, the "Squire" presented the appearance of one who was governed more by personal ideas of comfort in dress than of one who bowed the knee to the dictates of fashion. Yet the old Squire, underneath an apparel that would mark him a fair target for fools, carried a shrewd, intelligent mind, and a big, generous heart. He belonged to the old school of political economists, which, unfortunately for the people of this country, has now but few representatives. He believed in making laws for the whole people and not for the privileged few. He believed that our laws should be so framed and administered that they would tend to the advancement of the vast toiling masses, and the greater glory of the nation. If he had his "way," as he was wont to exclaim, the country would soon be unrivaled in prosperity and greatness.

Greeting Arbyght and his wife in a warm, hearty manner, he divested himself of the mammoth cap, huge comforter and globular mittens, and then proceeded to transact the business that brought him to the old homestead. The deed was soon signed, and, that disposed of, the Squire was inclined to be talkative.

"Mrs. Arbyght," he exclaimed, "how in the name of goodness did you ever conclude to sell the old farm?"

Irene was pained and puzzled, the Squire, however, did not wait for an answer, but continued almost in the same breath:

“Forty years ago, your father and myself came from Massachusetts and settled in this place. It was then a trackless wilderness. We built log cabins and had many a tough struggle, not alone with the bears and wolves, and the forests that surrounded us in almost unbroken extent, but also with hunger and cold. But we conquered, we triumphed; yes, by gad, we did!” and he brought his fist down on the table with terrible vehemence.

“Where did you go to market, or obtain your stock of provisions?” asked Arbyght.

“Market! ha, ha, ha! Well, that is good. Why, my boy, there was no market within thirty miles of us, and no roads or means of reaching it. We found our way through the woods by marking the trees. But it is all over now, and here we have as fine an agricultural and grazing country as can be found in Northern Pennsylvania.”

The Squire always delighted in a recital of the early trials and struggles of the old settlers, but to Mrs. Arbyght it was a more than twice, or thrice-told tale, and she managed to turn the conversation in an adroit manner, by asking if there was any news in Silvertown.

“News! Why, bless your soul, my dear, lots of it, lots of it! There is always any quantity and variety of news floating around up there, but whether true or false, I will not attempt to say,” he added, parenthetically. “But, ma’am, I am sorry to say there is some very sad and serious news; yes, very sad,” and the old man’s voice, as he uttered the concluding word, sank almost to a husky whisper.

“Why!” exclaimed both husband and wife, with an alarmed and startled look. “What is the matter, Squire?”

“The wildcats again, blast ’em! blast ’em! I

say. The country is ruined, the people beggared and hideous famine is again threatening the land, all because a few thieves and scoundrels would be rich at the expense of the honest, hardworking men of the country," the old man replied with an emphasis that left no doubt of his sincerity.

"The wildcats!" interjected Mrs. Arbyght, more alarmed and startled than ever. "Why, Squire Stanley, what do you mean?"

"Well, ma'am, I don't mean the ferocious wildcats of the woods. By gad! I but wish it were only as bad as that. They don't come to you in the guise of humanity. They are your enemies and you know it, and are prepared to meet them. The kind of wildcats I mean come to you in the shape of friends and public benefactors, and, having secured your confidence, clutch you by the throat in an unguarded moment, and, like vampires, suck your very heart's blood, steal your substance, rob your children, craze your brain, drive you to despair, and finish by forcing you into the dishonored grave of the bankrupt and debtor. What do I mean!" thundered the old man, as he sprang to his feet, "I mean"—down came his hand with a crash on the table—"I mean wildcat banks! That's what I mean, Mrs. Arbyght," and he sank into a chair almost exhausted with the violence of his emotion.

"Ah, I heard, or read in one of the papers, that a financial crisis was apprehended, but I did not expect it so soon," said Arbyght.

"But it has come," said the Squire, "and a sad, sad coming it has proved to many a poor man in my neighborhood," and again the old man's voice became low and husky.

"How so?" asked Mrs. Arbyght.

"Well, you see," said the Squire, "during the

last months nearly all the stock for sale, surplus grain, butter and other produce has been bought and sent out of the country by drovers and speculators from adjoining States; all of which was paid for with New Jersey money; and now comes the news that this money is worthless, as the banks have all failed. Half of the farmers in this section of the country are hopelessly ruined. These bank notes were professedly based on a specie reserve, but the banks issued from five to ten more dollars in paper than they had dollars in specie in their vaults. These notes they disposed of to speculators and usurers, who flooded the country with them and bought up all our stock and other productions. Then the usurers and speculating sharks, in accordance with a prearranged plan, advanced discounts and interests, and a run on the banks and collapse of the hollow frauds was the result. The bankers, usurers, and speculators made fortunes, but the poor farmers and mechanics are beggared."

"But can't this wholesale robbery be stopped by law?" asked Mrs. Arbyght.

"Most undoubtedly it can," replied the Squire, "and if I had my way it would be stopped. But we have no law, at least, no righteous law governing the issuance of money."

"Why, how would you mend the matter?" asked Arbyght.

"Well, sir, if I had the power I would make Uncle Sam issue all the money, and I would have it based on a specie reserve of both gold and silver and of a sufficient amount to make it always secure in the hands of the holder, and then we would have a national, permanent and uniform circulating medium. A dollar would be a dollar wherever you went, and crossing State lines would not

affect the value of the money you might have in your pocket. Discounts would be unknown, periodic financial crises and business collapses less frequent, and bankers would not be enabled to fatten on the farmer and mechanics, by making and controlling the money of the country."

"I dare say you are right," said Arbyght, "but we must go, or we will keep Mr. Morris waiting until his patience is exhausted."

The Squire got ready for the road, and Richard, after kissing his wife and children, started with him for Silverville.

Arbyght's mission to the village was to make the transfer of the property, and receive the money for it. He was also to receive payment for and cancel certain notes and mortgages due the estate, amounting in all to about five thousand dollars. The village was reached about twelve o'clock, but Mr. Morris, the purchaser of the farm, had not yet arrived, and did not put in an appearance until three o'clock in the afternoon. He explained the delay by saying that he was detained by a dinner party, given to an impecunious nephew, who was about to depart for the West to make his fortune. This delay forced Arbyght to remain in the village until nearly dark.

Silverville, at the time we write, was not a place that offered much inducement to any one to live within its limits. Even at that date it was an old and somewhat dilapidated, village of straggling wooden buildings, thrown together promiscuously, without any apparent pretension to order or design. The principal part of the village was on the crest of a hill, which gradually sloped on both sides for about a mile, when the bottom of the valley, or valleys, was reached, and two other long steep hills loomed up beyond. East and west across

these hills, and the bottoms, ran the principal street of Silvertown. North from the village ran two main roads, about three-quarters of a mile apart, converging about two miles beyond the town, and becoming one road for a mile or more, when they again diverged.

CHAPTER III.

A MURDER AND ROBBERY.

As the twilight shadows were settling down on the hamlet, and the last rays of the setting sun had ceased to bathe in mellow light the forest-covered eastern hill tops, Arbyght, mounted on a stout farm horse, started on a brisk trot for home, on the more westerly of the roads mentioned in the preceding chapter. About the same time, a horseman emerged from the shadow of the old village school-house, which stood on the upper or eastern road, and urged his horse forward at a frightful pace. He cast two or three rapid but furtive glances at Arbyght, and was soon lost sight of in the thick timbers that skirted each side of the road. The road taken by Arbyght to reach his home encountered a dense forest half a mile from town, through which it passed until the point was reached where the two roads converged.

The mind of Arbyght, as he journeyed homeward, was filled with loving thoughts of his wife and children, and the future home and colossal fortune he was to make for them in the great West.

But as he thought of the twenty thousand dollars he had on his person, a shade of anxiety swept across his handsome countenance. What if anything should happen to him? The thought frenzied and maddened him. He clutched the cash with one hand, and with the other opened the holsters and examined his pistols. It was now quite dark, and he had advanced for some distance on the forest-girded highway. Just before the road emerged from the woods it passed over a small hill, known as the "Summit," at the foot of which, on the village side, there was a slight dip or depression.

As Arbyght neared this spot, he noticed, or rather outlined, a horseman coming down the hill at a sharp trot, and could hear distinctly the panting of the rapidly-ridden beast. His first impression was that some person was sick, and that the horseman was going to Silverville for a physician. He had hardly time to form a second opinion before they met, just at the foot of the hill.

The stranger did not slacken his speed, but came directly toward Arbyght, who, to avoid a collision, turned his horse to one side. In passing, the stranger suddenly checked his steed, caught the bridle-rein of Arbyght's horse, came to a sudden halt and presented an ugly-looking pistol, with the ominous words:

"Your money or your life!"

Arbyght was not a coward, but this sudden and unexpected attack completely disconcerted him.

The robber thrust his pistol closer to Arbyght's face, and in more threatening tones said:

"Pass over that twenty thousand dollars, or take the consequences."

By this time Arbyght was himself again, and, dashing aside the weapon of his assailant with his

left hand, he at the same instant drew a pistol from his holster with his right hand, and snapped it in the very teeth of the robber. But horrors! it missed fire. Yet the bare act, its quickness and boldness, unnerved the highwayman and he recoiled in his saddle; and, before he recovered, Arbyght drew the other pistol, which also failed him by missing fire.

His assailant now burst into a loud and forced laugh and said:

"Did you think I was fool enough to attack you, knowing you to be armed? Oh no; I am too old a bird for that. I fixed those bull-dogs of yours while your horse was in the stable at Silverville; so the safest course for you to take is to deliver up that money cheerfully and gracefully."

"Curses on you!" said Arbyght, rendered desperate as he thought of home and his loved ones, "do you think I am going to rob my wife and children? The money is not mine; it is theirs. Only three thousand dollars of it is mine. You can take that, but my wife's property I can not and will not give you."

"Why, man, you are a fool," was the reply, "I will have it and your life too if you don't hand it over in ten seconds."

"Fiend, incarnate devil, robber, and murderer, I know you now. Take that, and that!" said Arbyght, as he leaned forward and dealt his assailant two powerful blows with the pistol he held in his hand; and giving the rein a powerful jerk, loosened it from the robber's grasp and dashed away. But, alas! it did not avail, for recovering from the suddenness of the attack, the latter fired, and the ball, striking Arbyght between the shoulders, gave him a mortal wound. The assassin's horse being much faster than the farm steed rid-

den by Arbyght, the latter was overtaken before he reached the crest of the hill. Here a fierce struggle ensued. Arbyght, nerved by thoughts of his wife and children, fought with the ferocity of a wild beast. In the struggle both men were unhorsed ; but the wounded man was fast sinking. He knew that he could not live, and his only hope was to kill his assailant, and thereby save his wife's property, as he knew that it would be found on his person. Hence he fought with a tenacity born of desperation. Feeling, however, that hope was rapidly dying within him, he again prayed that his wife's and children's inheritance might be spared them ; but his plea was in vain. Then he offered half of it.

" Oh ! " he prayed, " for the love of heaven, of God and His angels, leave my wife and children one-half of it—just one-half of it ; for my sake, for theirs, for God's sake ! "

But he dealt with a fiend with a heart of iron. When he saw that his prayers were of no avail he summoned all his remaining strength for one final effort. He caught the assassin and robber in a deadly embrace, and together they rolled over and over on the road. At last Arbyght clutched his antagonist by the throat, and held him with such tenacity that he gasped for breath and turned black in the face ; but the superhuman effort put forth by the dying man hastened the flow of the vital current, and his clutch on the assassin's throat gradually relaxing, the latter made a desperate effort and cast Arbyght off, apparently dead.

The murderer then struggled to his feet, and, after supporting himself against an old stump by the roadside for a moment to gain breath, approached the body of his victim with a malignant and exultant scowl.

But when he saw the pale, upturned face of Richard Arbyght, upon which still lingered a look of supplicating entreaty, his craven heart was appalled ; his cowardly soul was paralyzed with fear, his teeth chattered, his whole frame trembled, and his tottering limbs almost failed him as he involuntarily recoiled from that accusing face. The rumbling sound of a wagon was heard in the distance. The thought of new danger forced the murderer to a realization of his position. Quaking with fear, he again approached his victim. Bending low over him, and detecting no signs of life, he thrust his hand between his outer and inner coats and drew forth the well-filled wallet. With trembling but eager fingers he opened it, to make sure that he had secured the money ; and, being satisfied on that score, he placed it in an inner pocket of his own coat. The sound of approaching wheels was now quite distinct, and with a desperate effort he dragged the body of his victim into the adjoining underbrush, and then, with a horrible imprecation, fled up the road down which he had first advanced. A moment afterward a heavy lumber wagon, drawn by a stout team of farm horses and containing two men, passed in the same direction.

The wound received by Arbyght, though a mortal one, did not produce immediate death. His struggle for his wife's property and children's inheritance hastened it ; but when left by his assassin he was not dead. What appeared to be death was a heavy stupor caused by the loss of blood and over-physical and mental exertion, from which he was roused by the shock received when rudely thrown into the underbrush. The first gleam of reason that came back to his clouded brain, induced an act that plainly indicated what thoughts were up-

permost in his mind when life and reason momentarily left him. The act was characteristic. He thought not of himself. He knew that he could not live, and his whole soul was centered in those whom he so fondly and unselfishly loved, and for whom he had so valiantly struggled.

He thrust his hand into his pocket, but the treasure was not there. A look of utter hopelessness, of pitiable, heartrending sadness darkened his pale face. Stretched out on the cold earth, his body writhed in agony, but his physical sufferings were bliss compared to the despair which tortured his mind.

“My God! Oh, my God!” he exclaimed, “why hast thou permitted this fearful calamity to fall upon me? My wife and children, oh merciful Heaven! what will become of them? Oh, God, as Thou hast permitted them to be robbed of the treasures of this earth, and of their only protector, take, oh, take them 'neath Thy fostering care, and be Thou a treasure and protector to them.”

The spring of life was fast drying up. The last words were uttered in a whisper. The soul of Richard Arbyght would soon wing its flight to the mysterious beyond; it already stood upon the last portal of its clay-built tenement. But not yet; the love and devotion for those that would mourn his loss, as more bitter than death, inspired one last thought in the mind of the dying man. A contented smile now illumined his face. He roused himself from the lethargy of death, and raising his body and supporting it with his left arm, with his right hand he drew forth a large diary, and across the page where he found the pencil, he began to trace some hard characters. He had scarcely written ten letters, when his arm bent under the weight of his body, his eye became glazed and vacant, a

shudder ran through his whole frame and his teeth became firmly set. Was it death? No, not yet. His hand clutched the diary, and as a man writing with closed eyes he traced the balance of the letters that represented the thought in his mind. A happy look now settled upon his pallid features, his lips opened and he uttered oneword, "Irene," and all was over. With the cadence of that last word, in life so sweet to him, his spirit took its flight. Irene was his all, his soul, and with the utterance of the word, he delivered it up to its maker. Its way was lit by the glinting rays of the mild, full moon, which at that instant shone out through a rift in the dark pall that shrouded the heavens. The moon's mellow light shone upon, and for an instant glorified the upturned countenance of the dead, then, as if horrified by the spectacle, the gentle orb quickly hid her sorrowing face behind a scowling cloud—and the dead was alone.

CHAPTER IV.

THE DREAM'S GHASTLY SEQUENCE.

In the dining-room of the old homestead the table was arranged for supper. A cheerful wood fire sparkled upon the hearth of the large, open, brick chimney, and by its glow made faint and dim the illuminator of those days, the inevitable candle. The old, dark, time-stained, oak-paneled wainscoting, that reached half way from the floor to the ceiling, gave the room a somber appearance, which was in a measure relieved by the snowy

whiteness of the ashen floor. Mrs. Arbygth, Master Richard and the baby were the only persons in the room. Mrs. Arbygth's face wore an anxious, expectant look. Her quick ear caught the slightest sound. At half-past seven the old-fashioned clock suddenly stopped. Irene was not superstitious, nor did she believe in omens; but this incident filled her soul with an unspeakable dread of impending evil. She started the pendulum and the old clock ticked on as before. Master Richard ran frequently to the window facing the road and peered into the outer darkness, then turning would exclaim in a tone of mingled impatience and disappointment:

“Mamma, why don't papa come?”

The old clock struck eight, nine, ten, eleven, twelve, as the hours passed slowly, slowly away. The silence in the room was oppressive. The slightest noise sounded wonderfully distinct and clear; the tall branching pines in front of the house sighed and moaned in the rising breeze; the tu-whoo-tuwhit-tuwhoo of the owl and the screech of the nighthawk sounded unnaturally weird and loud, and it seemed as if the measured tick of the old clock could be heard rods and rods away. The very air seemed charged with something not of earth. Without, the sky was lowering, moonless, starless. Irene could hear and count each beat of her heart; she continually and instinctively turned her eyes to different parts of the room as if she expected to see something that she felt must be there. She finally took Master Richard by the hand, leading him to the cradle, in which slept peaceably the unconscious babe; she there knelt and prayed long and earnestly; prayed until her heart was in a measure relieved; prayed as she gazed fondly at the sleeping infant while the boy nestled close to his moth-

er's feet and dropped into a deep slumber ; prayed until her head inclined upon the cradle and she also dropped into a fitful sleep.

Three hours later, in the grayish dawn that precedes the day, three men returning from Silverville, after a night of bacchanalian revelry, stopped on the very spot where Richard Arbyght was murdered to debate some vexed question that arose during the night's debauch, and on which they were unable to agree. While disputing and arguing, their attention was directed to and aroused by blood on the ground, and other evidences of the previous night's struggle. In examining the traces of the too-apparent conflict, the body of the murdered man was found and recognized. After a short consultation, it was decided that one should guard the body, another secure some kind of a conveyance to take it home, and the third go ahead and break the sad intelligence to the stricken wife. The man who was left to guard the body noticed, as soon as the others had left, the open diary in the hand of the dead man. He stooped and picked it up rather quickly. In doing so, however, a leaf remained in the clenched hand, wrenched from the book. This leaf, after no little effort, he removed from the fingers that seemed to hold it with a vice-like grip. He glanced over it hastily, then muttered audibly :

"Surely, the blood of the murdered cries to heaven for vengeance ; you are tracked, my fine fellow, and will pay dearly for this."

Suddenly a new thought seemed to have been born within him ; he looked eagerly around, and, as he heard a wagon approaching, he thrust the torn leaf into his vest pocket.

The party who was detailed to secure a vehicle to convey the body home met a man with an ordi-

nary one-horse market wagon, on his way to Silverville, whom he easily persuaded to undertake the charitable task. The body was carefully placed in the wagon, and with heavy hearts they started for the old farm house. They soon overtook the man who had started on ahead, and they all went on together.

With a sudden start Mrs. Arbyght awoke from the dream which opens this story, her face covered with drops of clammy perspiration, and her limbs palsied with the terror that filled her soul. She gazed wildly around ; the rising sun was streaming into the room. The candle, burned down to the socket, was expiring with a flickering glimmer, and the fire had gone out. Otherwise the room was the same as when she had fallen asleep.

The sound of wheels broke on her ear ; she started, filled with a premonition of evil ; a cold tremor darted through her frame. The sound came nearer and nearer, but every revolution of the wheels seemed to roll an ever-increasing weight upon her heart. The wheels stopped, the sound ceased. She rose to her feet. The door swung open and four men entered, bearing between them the cold, dead remains of him who had truly been bone of her bone and flesh of her flesh. She struggled forward, involuntarily dropped the babe she had taken from the cradle, threw her hands upward, uttered a piercing scream and sank senseless to the floor.

CHAPTER V.

ORPHANED AND ALONE.

We will draw a veil over the three years that elapsed after the death of Richard Arbyght. The sorrowing, heart-broken widow would have died the day her husband's body was brought home but for her children. She tried to live for them; they were her only hope and solace; all else was burned out of her young life. But how would she support them? This was a serious, a perplexing question. She wrote to Richard's father a full account of her sad condition. A short time afterward she received a letter from Richard's mother, stating that Mr. Arbyght had also gone to that undiscovered realm from whose shores none return. The financial panic, which had swept over the country at that time, had completely ruined him, and his losses so preyed upon his mind as to produce temporary insanity and death. The letter closed by saying: "We are ruined—beggared." Mrs. Arbyght was hard pressed. To work she was unable, means she had none. Mr. Morris, the purchaser of the farm, was to move in immediately. Despair seized the stricken widow. But when all failed, noble old Squire Stanley came to her assistance, and offered her and her children such as he had. The kind, generous offer was gladly accepted. Many efforts were made to bring the murderer of Richard Arbyght to justice, but without avail. No clue could be found, not even a suspicion could be fastened on anybody. But murder will out—the eye of justice never sleeps.

Irene Arbyght, in spite of a desire to live for her

children, pined daily. Her spirit and her heart were broken. She gradually failed in strength, and three years after the death of her husband, her spirit went to him, and three years from the day he was buried she was laid by his side in the old village churchyard. The two children were now orphaned and alone, indeed.

Shortly after the mother's death, a lady on a visit to Mrs. Morris, wife of the purchaser of the "Adair Homestead," was passing through Silverville, and, seeing little Bertha Arbyght, now three years and six months old, took a strange fancy to her. She ascertained the little girl's history, and then waited upon the old Squire.

After making herself known to the old man, she said—

"Squire, I understand you have a little orphan girl under your care."

"Yes, madam, and a beautiful child she is; vivacious, good-natured, and wise beyond her years."

"Of that I am convinced," she replied, "as I have seen her; but I see you have a house full of children, and I think you might give Bertha to me. I will raise her respectably, give her a good education, make a lady of her—in short, I desire to adopt her. You can see Mr. Morris and ascertain from him what are my antecedents and standing."

"My dear madam," said the Squire, "your offer is certainly a liberal one, and no doubt it would be better for the child. I will talk to Master Richard about it, and also consult with Mr. Morris, and let you know the conclusion reached in a few days."

"My heart is set on that child, and I trust you will conclude to accept my proposition. I appre-

ciate your kind reception of my offer, and I hope to hear a favorable reply," she said, as she arose to depart.

The lady's antecedents and standing proved to be all that could be desired, and the old Squire, after long consideration and many misgivings, reluctantly consented to let the child go. Young Richard seemed to be the chief obstacle. The boy idolized his little sister, and since the death of his mother, he felt, boy as he was, that he should be to the little one both father and mother. Their childish hearts had become so entwined that it was hard to suggest anything that would separate them. Richard was old enough, however, to appreciate the advantage of the offer, and after it had been stipulated that one year from the time of her departure he should see her, he consented, and the weeping child was taken from his arms to her new home, some four hundred miles distant.

When the year had rolled by, and Richard was expecting to see his sister as per agreement, a letter was received by Squire Stanley, informing him that little Bertha had just died from a severe attack of croup. Inclosed in the letter was a locket that Bertha had worn since she was six months old. The locket was for Richard. To our young hero this was a terrible blow, and, although but ten years old, he felt it keenly. He realized that now he was entirely alone in the cold, wide world; for outside the circle of the old Squire's love and generous care, it was an unexplored land to him. It was many a day before the color came back to his cheek, the fire of youth to his eye, or joy to his young heart—saddened thus early by a triple loss and bereavement. As time passed on, however, the elasticity of youth asserted itself, and he regained his accustomed activity and spirit.

In summer Richard worked on the farm for the Squire, and in winter attended the village school. He was quick and apt at everything in the line of common school studies, but he appeared to be especially endowed with a love for, and had a very clear comprehension of mathematics. He was also of a very philosophic and inquiring turn of mind. He was generally at the head of his class, and realized that he was quick and bright, while he knew he was studious. But he was punished oftener than other boys less favored by nature than himself. Though he was obedient, gentle and kind, the teacher was harsh to him, while others, who could rarely recite their lessons well, and who were disposed to be unruly, not only escaped punishment, but were otherwise favored. Richard pondered these things considerably. He noticed that the favored scholars were the best-dressed boys in the school. His own clothes were plain, almost coarse. After much thought and reflection he came to the conclusion that his treatment by the teacher was due to his shabby attire. It must be so, for he was brighter, more studious, and, he even felt, of better manners.

One evening he laid the matter before the old Squire and asked him if his conclusions were correct. The Squire looked at the boy in amazement, acknowledged that he was right, but added that he was too young to investigate such questions. This did not satisfy Richard, who said he even noticed that the neighbors in the village who lived in fine houses and wore good clothes, had more respect shown them than other neighbors who were in many ways much better than they. But the old Squire simply shook his head and said that was a matter he would understand when he grew older.

In his fifteenth year, Richard's thirst for knowl-

edge became so intense that his inability to acquire it rendered him morose and unhappy. He literally devoured all the books, papers and periodicals that came in his way. He desired to study algebra, philosophy, rhetoric, geometry and other higher branches of which he had heard and read. He had been told that these studies tended to expand and beautify the mind, and to strengthen and more thoroughly equip it for the battle of life. But his aspirations in this direction were checked by his inability to purchase or procure suitable text books, and to add to his humiliation he saw the favored boys of the village school, many of whom were boys of evil habits, sent by their parents to a neighboring college. Although the boy had been inured from childhood to patient endurance and calm resignation, still this matter chafed him continually. It was to his young inquiring brain an habitual source of constant and vexatious thought. He finally broached the subject to the Squire. The old man counseled fortitude, resignation and perseverance.

"But," said Richard, "I don't understand this; can't there be some means provided by which poor boys, who are so disposed, can obtain an education?"

"Well, my boy, it doesn't seem right. No, by gad, it don't; but then you see this is a very selfish world. While it would be very good policy to educate bright boys like yourself, yet we don't look far enough ahead for that."

"Oh, I know that full well; but Squire, is it right or just? That's what I would like to know."

"Why," said the Squire, after some hesitation, "I hardly think it is just or right. It is manifestly unjust, but I can't see how the evil can be remedied." The Squire was drawing the boy out.

"But I can," said Richard.

"You can!" said the old man, almost startled out of his seat; "come, come, my boy," he said, after his surprise subsided. "You astonish me—yes, by gad, you do. Well, well! you can prescribe a remedy, can you? Well, let's hear it, boy, let's hear it."

Richard paused.

"Out with it, lad, out with it."

"Well," said Richard, "would it not be better for the country to have everybody educated?"

"Certainly, it would, my boy."

"Well then," said Richard, "why don't the State educate those who can't educate themselves? Is not ignorance a dangerous thing for the country?"

"There, there, my boy," replied the Squire, now thoroughly aroused, "you have touched upon a question of vital importance to the Republic. It should be admitted by every man, who aspires to statesmanship, that to fit every child in the land, who is one day destined to become one of the sovereign factors of the Nation, for the patriotic and intelligent discharge of the duties of a citizen and elector, is the great, paramount duty of the State. A far-reaching, far-seeing and sound generous statesmanship would make education in all its phases gratuitous to every child in the land; and what's more, as far as consistent and possible, compel these children to acquire such an education as would fit them for the responsible duties of citizens of a great and free Republic; besides, all the graded schools, academies, colleges and universities should be controlled by the State, and should be free, so far as tuition is concerned, to all who might desire to avail themselves of the opportunity they would afford to secure a higher and broader

education. By such an educational system our Republic would fortify itself against the greatest enemy of free government—ignorance. The time will come when this question will be brought home to the people of this country; and necessity and the law of self-preservation, which governs communities as well as individuals, will then compel intelligent men to recognize its benefits and labor for a more general educational system, although its merits as a proposition will not gain it a hearing now. And my boy, of one thing I am certain, under such a system you would not long remain an obscure village lad; you are an embryo Jefferson, by gad, you are!" and the old man hobbled out of the room murmuring:

"Books! books! he has been reading books."

When Richard was sixteen years of age, the Squire informed him that it was very essential that he should learn a trade of some kind. He was allowed to decide what trade he would follow. The boy thought over the matter a few days and finally decided to learn the cooper trade.

Arrangements were accordingly made with the village cooper, and a few days afterward Richard was regularly installed as an apprentice in the shop, and began to take his first lessons in the mysteries of the craft.

The Squire's house was still his home, and although his time was occupied during the day he found leisure at night to pursue his studies. He attended school the following winter, but found the village master unable to lead him further as an instructor, and he was thus thrown entirely upon his own resources as far as education was concerned. He applied himself diligently to learn his trade and mastered the various parts of it rapidly. At the end of two years he was master

of nearly half a dozen different branches of the craft.

At the age of eighteen he secured a teacher's certificate, and for the next three years taught school during the winter months, and worked at his trade in summer.

Three years of alternate mental and physical labor developed in our hero a vigorous young manhood. At twenty-one he was six feet in height, straight as a gun-barrel, had prominent cheekbones, a swarthy complexion, was rather slender but lithe, sinewy and strong, with quick elastic movement; dark hair and eyes; his nose, mouth and chin denoted strength and firmness of character; his countenance was open and expressive; his demeanor dignified and grave; his mind philosophical, his heart brave and sympathetic. Strictly speaking, he could not be called handsome or graceful, but his every look and movement indicated a nature surcharged with nervous force, and gave assurance of the greatness and goodness of that noblest attribute of man—soul.

At this juncture, the mutterings of the storm that plunged the country into the great struggle between sections could be heard; and before Richard had fully determined as to his future course, war was declared, and the heart of Richard Arbyght throbbed in response to his country's rallying call; and recognizing but one duty in that hour of national peril, he enlisted, shouldered a musket, and joined the ranks of the defenders of the old flag. By merit and close application and bravery in the field, he rose from a private to the rank of lieutenant-colonel; and through the long months and years of that terrible contest he never faltered.

When peace was declared and the soldier was

again merged into the citizen, Richard returned to Silverville. But the old Squire and his wife, who had so long been father and mother to him, were no more. The scenes of his childhood he cared for no longer. The village seemed more forlorn and desolate than ever. He stood upon its grass-covered streets—alone. Alone in the boundless waste of wickedness, selfishness and depravity, termed the world—utterly alone. He determined to seek other scenes, where, perhaps, he would forget to some extent his sorrows; where at least every housetop, street, tree or person he saw or met would not continually remind him of them. He tarried long enough to place a suitable monument over the grave of his parents, and then left the village forever.

He first tried to secure a position in which mental rather than physical labor would be required; but after three months of fruitless search and effort, he gave it up in despair. He found that friends and influence had more to do in securing such positions than merit or fitness.

Having grown heartily tired of wandering about the country, he concluded to purchase a set of tools and go to work at his trade. This resolve he put into immediate execution. He went to Philadelphia and worked there about eighteen months, but could never accustom himself to the place or people. He had an instinctive horror of aimless, nomadic wandering; he wished to locate permanently, but could not believe the city of "Brotherly Love" was the place. Chicago often occurred to him—even in his dreams some invisible power seemed to urge him on to that city; a shadowy something seemed to beckon him, and he frequently thought the shadow was a substance. He tried hard to combat this feeling, but in vain. The

attractive power of that invisible something in the Western city grew greater and greater, until it became irresistible, so much so that Richard Arbyght, two years after his discharge from the army, found himself en route for the far-famed city of Chicago.

CHAPTER VI.

A PHILOSOPHICAL TRAMP.

The night following the morning that Richard left Philadelphia, he found himself in a crowded car in the seat immediately behind a man of about thirty years of age, of medium height and build, strong features, laughing eyes and mouth, and general expression of happy, careless nouchalance. His clothes, though new and of good material, fitted him badly, and he wore them rather ungracefully. He attempted several times to engage our hero in conversation, but Richard was just then too busy with his own thoughts. Toward midnight, Arbyght's good-natured neighbor curled himself upon the seat, put his old, worn leather satchel under his head and was soon sleeping soundly. He had not been sleeping long, however, before a young man who had all the evening been playing practical jokes upon his companions stopped in the aisle in front of the sleeper and in a loud voice cried :
" Tickets ! "

The good-natured traveler awoke, rubbed his eyes and, comprehending the situation in an instant, drew from a pocket of his overcoat a flask, took a

drink, smacked his lips and, turning to Richard with a comical expression, said:

"It's very strange; but do you know that I always wake up when I want a drink?"

The laugh was on the joker, and he found it convenient to leave the car.

"Have a drink?" said the good-natured man to Richard.

"Thank you; I seldom drink."

"No offense, I hope?"

"Certainly not. I appreciate your kindness," replied Arbygth, who by this time had become interested in his companion.

"Going far?"

"To Chicago," answered Richard.

"That's lucky—going there myself; have the blues terribly; have been hoping all day to find some one I could talk to. My name is Tom Castaway, and I live wherever night finds me."

"If you travel much, I should judge you had rather a roomy home," laughed Arbygth.

"Well, I'm not crowded, at all events; but might I ask what is your name?"

"Richard Arbygth, and just now, like yourself, this car is my home."

"I'm what's termed a tramp; I'm a cooper by trade and am going to Chicago in search of work."

"Why, that is strange," exclaimed Arbygth, "I, too, am a cooper by trade and am going to Chicago to locate."

"Why, Dick, my boy, I am glad to meet you; a fellow-feeling makes us old friends, you know," and before Arbygth was aware of it, Mr. Castaway was shaking his hand warmly and vigorously.

"How long have you been a member of the craft?" asked Richard.

"About fifteen years."

“ You must have commenced quite young.”

“ Now, Dick,” replied Castaway, impulsively, “ as we are both going to Chicago and are going to be friends, I want to tell you my history. I don’t want you to take me on trust.”

“ Oh, that is not necessary. I think I have some knowledge of human nature. I am willing to take you on trust, provided you so take me.”

“ Dick, my boy—pardon my familiarity—you are all right ; but I want to tell you who and what I am ; then you can judge if I am a man whose friendship is worth having.”

“ Oh, well, if you so desire it, go ahead.”

Mr. Castaway arose, turned the back of the seat on which he was sitting, sat down facing Richard, and began :

“ On the seventh day of November, 1837, at midnight, as the clock struck twelve, I came into this terraqueous sphere. On what portion of it I am unable to say, as I have no distinct recollection of the event further than I have been able to deduce from my horoscope, which, unlike Goethe’s, was not propitious. The sun had not culminated in the antipodes, the moon had not reached her planetary hour, the earth was neither in perihelion or aphelion ; Venus, Saturn, Jupiter, Mars, and Mercury scowled fiercely ; so you see the astrologers managed things very inauspiciously for me, and to their unkindness I, of course, attribute many of my misfortunes.

“ Authors have a mania for diving into what appears to be useless minutiae when treating of the lives of great men. This unnecessary, insane method of detailing the events of a great life I will avoid ; in fact, I despise it, because I think the early lives of all great men are alike, or nearly so, in every particular. It is impossible to convince

me that the infantile existence of Julius Cæsar or Napoleon differed in any essential point from that of George Francis Train or myself. I look back with not the slightest species of regret upon the miscalled halcyon period of my career, because when I do so, faint glimmerings of something like memoric flashes course through my brain, hand in hand with painful ideas of unmerciful flagellations received from a dark, ireful, scowling, ancient-looking man, whom I *presume* to have been my sterner parent.

“I know nothing about my maternal ancestor. In my early days I was not cognizant of the so-called sweet influence of a woman ; even yet I have failed to find the article in its poetical genuineness. The only woman I knew, or rather *felt*, at that time was an old amazonian beldam, villainous looking as a gipsy centennarian hag. She had no relations of consanguinity toward me. She was simply a step-mother. I often thanked the stars for that. This tigress died when I was ten years old. No pen can describe, nor can words express, the ecstatic delight that flooded my soul when I was really convinced that the old lady had departed from among us. The old man, whom I presumptively believed to be the author of my corporeal being, soon joined the beldam in the happy lands beyond our destructible planet. I was then a waif upon the boundless ocean of life. I became a sort of Arab or Bedouin, making my home when and where convenient. I took unutterable delight in the black slums and puddles that numerously abounded in the city—Pittsburgh—where I resided. I was thrown upon my own resources entirely. I did remarkably well while old Sol’s rays were at an angle of eighty, seventy, or even fifty degrees; but, as winter set in, I was roused to a sense of impending ca-

lamity. My garments were chiefly remarkable for the perfection of their ventilating qualities. I had no clear conception of what I would do. The pleasures of camping *en bivouac*, like all pleasures of this world, began to pall upon the appetite. I stood upon the curbstones and crossings, and watched for hours the manifold, astounding, ever-changing phenomena of what we call society, float steadily past me. Gilded carriages, like Jovian chariots, would rush by me with a stunning whirl, and then would come the dray, the cart and market wagons. Anon would come the pedestrian, clad in silks and ermine, and bedizened out of all reason with rare and costly gems. Then would come the begrimed and goaded laborer, the poor apple woman or half-clad mechanic's wife; again, the dainty school miss, followed by the haggard, pale-faced shop girl, would flit by. These social differences began to engross my attention. Too young by far to fathom the mysteries of sociality, I was, nevertheless, filled with amazement at the constantly changing phases of life that were daily presented to my young mind. When I saw some, gorgeously attired, stalk majestically past with haughty bearing and scornful mein, and contrasted these with the hundreds that followed in squalid livery, with downcast, haggard looks, I was filled with wonder, and thoughts, ghost-like and unbidden, would rise and beset my brain. Why, I would ask myself, are these things so? Why this difference? Which of these classes—for there are classes—is the most worthy of my appreciation or emulation? Which was the most worthy of the esteem of the world? While I was debating this question in my mind one day, I suddenly found myself in the hands of a cowardly-looking fellow, dressed in a blue coat, with brass

buttons. I was taken to a place called a court, where a spectacled, pig-headed man, who sat behind a desk, eyed me fiercely, and asked me, with a savage grunt, why I was a vagabond and vagrant. I told him I supposed it was because there was an insufficient amount of wealth or money in the world to make everybody rich, and when a few monopolized it all, the balance, of necessity, had to be poor, and poverty begat street arabs, and hence I was one. Now, this idea I heard somewhere before, and I flung it at pig-head spontaneously, but it made old spectacles awfully mad. He said I was a contumacious wretch, and forthwith he ordered me to the house of refuge. That just suited me. I had some sort of a home now; before, I had none. I was sent to the refuge school and waded through the drudgery of learning the alphabet without any serious trouble. I took to learning like fire to powder; new lights soon began to dawn upon my mind, and, like vegetation under the vivifying rays of a spring sun, dormant ideas and germs of thought began to sprout and bud within me. I reached the age of sixteen years, and was then offered the choice of a trade. As if under the mysterious guidance of some remote influence, I selected that of a cooper. This choice brought me in contact with persons whose influence had a strong tendency to shape the course of my after life in a manner that proved eventful if not highly romantic. I was apprenticed, or rather given, to one Obediah Skinflint. I will never forget my first interview with Mr. Skinflint. He was a rather small man, with one very peculiar facial expression. What struck me as remarkable, and immediately arrested my attention, was his enormous, ponderous nasal organ. The monstrous proportions of that nose threw all his other features

into the depths of obscurity. If I had such a nose I would commit suicide; but to Mr. Skinflint, I afterward learned, that nose was a feature which he regarded with the utmost complacency. The vision of that nasal prominence has continued to haunt me ever since. As soon as the man who had accompanied me had left, and I found myself alone with the Nose, a feeling of trepidation came over me. But Skinflint did not appear to notice my uneasiness, hence I became calm and eyed the nose abstractedly. My new master viewed me from two non-luminous, rather sheepish orbs, that appeared to have to struggle hard to bring the angle of incidence nearer than ten feet, so great was the obstruction of the nasal appendage. I eyed him in a like manner; he undoubtedly thought I was completely lost in admiration, which hypothesis impressed him favorably toward me.

“‘So you want to be a cooper, eh?’ said the Nose.

“‘Yes, sir,’ said I.

“‘Your name is ——?’

“‘It is,’ said I.

“The Nose scowled, but just then an awful racket was heard in the other room, in which the angry vehemence of an irate virago and the crying supplications of some bastinadoed culprit freely mingled. Skinflint rushed to the scene, and left me to ponder over that proboscis. While I was still thinking about the Nose, and half wondering or rather conjecturing what might be the cause of the din in the other room, the door of the apartment in which I and the Nose had the audience, burst open with a bang, and in rushed a boy about my own size. He was boohooing and blubbering at a fearful rate. He looked around the room with a sort of terrified, frightened stare, as if he was

being followed by the imp of Faust, and expected to be overtaken by his impship at any moment.

“ ‘Bub,’ said I, ‘what’s the matter?’ ”

“ ‘Are you the new apprentice?’ ”

“ ‘I believe so,’ said I. ”

“ ‘Well, you won’t need to ask me what’s the matter by this time to-morrow.’ ”

“ He uttered these words in a manner that left an impression that he meant more than he said. I was going to retort, but the sound of footsteps in the hall had an absconding effect on the boy, and he was gone before I could open my mouth. ”

“ ‘You’re here, are you?’ shrieked a voice behind me, in a tone that resembled the creak of a barn door opened for the first time in twenty years. I was so startled that I almost lost my sight, speech and center of gravity. However, I managed to turn round, and an apparition met my gaze that I will never forget, should I live to be as old as Methuselah; and still it was only a woman; but *such* a woman! I won’t burden you with a description of her; she was Skinflint’s better half, that ought to suffice, as she was eminently worthy of him in all respects and particulars. Seeing me she rushed upon me like a lioness robbed of her young. Her long, bony fingers, greasy and black, with villainous warlike looking nails, opened and shut like the claws of a lobster, as she shriekingly rushed upon me. My hair instinctively clung to my head, as if it knew she had some fiendish designs upon it. How I escaped I never could determine; but I did escape alive, and for the next four days I was continually reminded of the wisdom of old Solomon in saying it were better to dwell in the wilderness than abide in the house with an angry and contentious woman. These may not be the exact words of the wise man, but the idea is

the same. I don't profess a profound biblical erudition.

"I will pass over the first twelve months of my apprenticeship in silence. I prefer to leave this epoch of my life in the limbo of the past. It suggests reminiscences anything but pleasant. I did not make much headway at the trade during this period; I learned more about house-work, milking cows and feeding the various animals about the place than I did about making barrels or tubs. However, after a year had elapsed, another new apprentice was taken on, and I, in consequence, was promoted from the kitchen to the shop. The floggings, persecutions, and jawings I suffered during that year——beg pardon, Dick, I forgot I promised to let this matter rest. After my promotion things fared a little better with me. I did not see Mrs. Skinflint quite so often, and that was one consolation.

"‘In learning to split poles,’ said the Nose, with a wise look, one day after I had been working at the trade about a year, ‘you must bear in mind two things; first, split through a knot; and, second, split a crook traversely; that is, follow the crook; not like a boy splitting sled runners.’

"‘But these two rules I found would not work; at least not infallibly. One day I found a pole with knots on all sides. The next day I found one with a sharp crook to the right, followed by one to the left, then a perpendicular crook, followed by a horizontal one. This pole was also profusely covered with knots. I applied the Skinflint rule, but it failed to work; that stubborn pole was not to be made twain.

"‘The Nose said I should split it and not spoil it. I dissented; he insisted; a row ensued; the Nose’s wife came upon the scene; and, fearing martyr-

dom to an inapplicable rule, I fled. When out of sight of Skinflint's kingdom, I sat down on the roadside and began to ponder my hard lot. While I sat thinking, the embryo seed of independent thought and action began to germinate within me; and through the pure, placid, crystalline medium of dawning intellectuality, I saw a way to rid myself of all my evils. Yes, I would be free; I was firmly resolved on that. About twelve o'clock that night I stole cautiously back to the house, and through a window that opened on the roof I entered my room, scaring a fellow-apprentice almost out of his senses. This young man had been at the house about two years longer than myself, and was pretty thoroughly up in most parts of the trade. It was a part of my plans to induce this apprentice to accompany me, as I was determined on running away. Sam Inkson, (such was his name,) very readily entered into all my arrangements, as he was as heartily sick of the tyranny of Mrs. Nose as I was.

"Two hours later, habited in our 'go-to-meeting' apparel, we left the house by the window, roof, and shed route. We traveled the balance of that night and all the next day, and toward evening arrived at Deadville, a city of some ten thousand people. We secured lodgings at a second-class hotel, and were soon in the land of dreams.

"Next morning when I awoke, the sun was shining brightly, and Inkson had already arisen. I indistinctly remembered that Sam had called me a half dozen times, but I refused to get up, and dropped asleep again. Why I did not bound up when first called was a question that set me thinking. For the last two years I had risen every morning before dawn and there was no other alternative—I had to do it. But here, scarcely had

I broken the fetters ere I found myself abed and the sun fully three hours high. One disposed to examine things superficially might attribute my disinclination to get up to the fatigue of the previous day, or to the little debauch in which Sam and I had participated the previous evening; but I, in the light of a then rapidly awakening knowledge, attributed the phenomenon to a cause more recondite and philosophical. It was liberty! With the rapidity of lightning I grasped the all-important fact that there was no necessity whatever, either physical or moral, for getting up so early, or for disturbing the serene, delicious repose I was enjoying. I refused most decidedly to get up. I was free, and the proper enjoyment of the glorious attribute of individual liberty does not consist in getting up in the morning before you feel inclined to do so. This was the first fruit of liberty, and I was not going to cast it away. Sam again appeared and urged me to get up. I flatly refused.

“‘But you will lose your breakfast,’ said Sam.

“Ah! here was a motive of sufficient force to bring me to time, as it enabled me to overcome the inertia of my new position. I turned over and over in the bed in delicious ecstasy for a few moments longer and then rolled out. Breakfast was soon over, and then Sam begun to grow uneasy and wonder what was going to become of us. This matter gave me no concern whatever. I did not think it necessary to trouble myself about the future. With Epicurus, I believed that neither men nor gods should give themselves any unnecessary inconvenience. In the term men, I do not include fools, moralists of latter schools, and rogues. These I always considered anomalies, not subject to laws regulating normal humanity.

Knowledge of the future, I think, would make one devilish reckless. Let the dark future keep her secrets ; I don't want to penetrate them.

CHAPTER VII.

THE TRAMP'S STORY CONTINUED.

“ ‘ Well,’ said Sam, ‘ what do you propose to do?’ I was smoking a segar and thinking of anything but *doing*. I was almost mad for being so abruptly disturbed ; but getting mad was not, to my mind, at all philosophical. There are many reasons why a man should at all times steer clear of anger, but the most cogent reason that presented itself to my mind just then was the conviction that anger makes a slave of a man—a slave to his passions ; and, as I had just secured my liberty, I did not deem it wise to become a serf to myself. I wanted to be free, and as Pythagoras says, ‘ No man is free who does not command himself.’ I at once assumed a sternly rigid command over myself. I therefore simply looked at Sam, withdrew the segar from my mouth, which I shaped as pupils do when enunciating vocal sounds, and there issued from the cavity thus formed a circling wreath of blue smoke, immediately following which came the word, ‘ Nothing.’ ”

“ ‘ Nothing !’ echoed Sam, with alarming wonderment. ‘ Nothing ! Why, we must work or we will starve.’ ”

“ ‘ Sam.’ ”

“ ‘ Well?’ ”

“ ‘Have you noticed our landlord?’

“ ‘Yes.’

“ ‘Does he work?’

“ ‘He doesn’t seem to.’

“ ‘Does he look like starvation?’

“ At this Sam burst into a loud cachinnatory roar. No doubt the jolly round face of the landlord suggested anything but the idea of starvation, and no wonder Sam was tickled at the absurdity of the question.

“ ‘Why,’ he replied, ‘if men are fools enough to buy the old fellow’s whisky and eat his conglomerate, to keep him from toil, that is no reason why we should not work, and if it was, of what use would the knowledge be, since we must work anyway or not eat, and if we don’t eat we die.’

“ ‘Now, Sam,’ said I, ‘you are chopping logic, and I, for one, am an intense hater of logic. Of what earthly use is it to me to know that *deduction* is explicative of the contents of thought, or that *induction* is ampliative to the contents of a thought? The knowledge of these things, or the knowledge of an *a priori* or *a posteriori* science, is, no doubt, a great comfort to a fellow who understands them on a full stomach; but will they fill the inner man? That is the question. Now, in the reason-rendering syllogism they say, for instance, that B is A, but C is B, for it is D; therefore, C is also A. But let us reason it this way: Work is Money, but Cunning is Work, because it is Fact; therefore Cunning is Money. I tell you what it is; society is a goose with whose feathers the more astute human birds line their nests, and I say we have as good a right as the rest to a handful or two.’

“ It would be a waste of time to give the entire

argument *pro* and *con*. that Sam and I had on this subject. In fact, we argued for nearly three days, and were still arguing when the landlord put in an appearance and said he was going to market, and that he would be eternally obliged if we could accommodate him with the amount of our bills, as he was hard pressed for money. This was the substance of his remarks. He was very polite and used a great many words; was redundant, in fact.

“ ‘My dear sir,’ said Sam, in a tremor, ‘we have no money, but we are going to work to-morrow, and it will be all right. Won’t it, Castaway?’ he added, turning to me.

“ ‘Most gracious sir, it—it will—I mean—be all right.’

“ ‘See to it, then, that it is,’ said the landlord, going off in a big scowl.

“ ‘Castaway?’

“ ‘Inkson?’

“ ‘We are in for it,’ we both got out in a breath.

“ ‘Yes, we were in for it sure enough, notwithstanding all my fine-spun theories to the contrary. All that evening and a good share of the night, I buried myself in the nest of thought, and from the egg of necessity I finally hatched an idea.

“ ‘Next morning we started out bright and early, and were not long on the street before we heard the sound of an adze, and, like a man lost in the woods following the sound of a bell, we went toward the place whence came the familiar rat-a-tat. It proved to be a slack workshop. We went in, saw the boss, a genial, jolly, fat-faced old coon, and Sam asked him for a berth.

“ ‘Where are your tools?’ asked the man.

“ ‘Haven’t any,’ replied Sam.

“ ‘Tramps, eh?’ grinned the boss.

“ ‘Yes,’ said Sam, looking very cheap and crest-fallen.

“ ‘Well, we have a few old irons here, which we will loan you until you can procure better ones.’

“ ‘Where are they?’ asked Sam.

“ The man then took us to a berth in the middle of the shop, and then rummaged in an old box, from the cavernous depths of which he fished up some of the rustiest old scrap-iron you ever saw.

“ ‘There you are,’ he again grinned, and then left us to go to breakfast.

“ We looked around, and lo! we were alone in the shop. All the boys had gone to breakfast. We now proceeded to execute my idea—I had already confided it to Sam. One of the men left a barrel on the fire. Sam took this, drew it up and set to work on it. I raised another and put it on the fire in place of the one Sam had appropriated. Sam finished the barrel rapidly, and when it was finished it was a sight! It was the crookedest, twistiest barrel mortal man ever saw. We hid it away under the bench and covered it with chamberings and shavings and then began another barrel. By this time all the boys and the boss had returned. We continued to work, unmindful of the many glances cast sideways at us. In a short time Sam had another barrel finished—another type of crookedness, but not half so bad as the former. The boss came up and looked at it, and looked and laughed, and laughed and looked.

“ ‘May I be busted, but that is the crookedest barrel I ever seen—ha! ha! ha!—*ha! ha! ha!*—HA! HA! HA!’

“ I thought the man would choke; he turned purple and scarlet, but he finally cooled down. Sam took on terribly—got as angry as a hornet and bet

ten dollars that there was a crookeder barrel than that in the shop.

“ ‘I’ll do it,’ said the boss—‘ yes, I’ll bet \$15, —\$20.’

“ ‘Agreed,’ hissed Sam—oh, but he was angry.

“ ‘And I’ll bet ten more,’ said one of the men.

“ ‘Take it,’ hissed Sam again—he was getting more angry every moment.

“ ‘And I’ll go ten, too;’ ‘and so will I,’ ‘and I,’ cried three or four more men.

“ ‘Take it all,’ fairly roared Sam.

“ The money was all placed on the head of the barrel, but, strange as it may seem, the mirth and side-splitting laughter was so great that none of them ever seemed to notice the fact that Sam did not cover the stakes.

“ ‘Are you all done?’ asked Inkson, and as no one responded he took the silence for an assent. Then turning round he pulled the hidden barrel from under the bench. You ought to have seen the look of blank dismay that fell upon the betters when the serpentine barrel rolled out.

“ ‘They laugh that win,’ said Sam, thrusting the stamps into his pants’ pocket and diving through the door into the street, closely followed by myself.

“ ‘I don’t feel just right about this matter,’ said Inkson, after we had reached our hotel

“ ‘Nonsense, Sam,’ said I. ‘This is only an exemplification of my theory. That boss pockets at least four dollars of these men’s production every week. Now, granted that we took twenty or thirty dollars from him indirectly; what does it signify? It was not his money; hence, we did him no injustice, and besides, if these men are fools enough to be robbed by the boss, it is not so much his fault as their own; and then, have we

not as good a right to rob them as the boss or any other man?’

“Let me say right here that the conversations I had with Inkson were not in the language I am now using. The events, as I remember them, are, of course, old; the dress is new. Though a tramp for the last ten years, I have been a reader and a student. My ideas have changed greatly, and there are many things in my early career I would gladly forget if I could; yet I am still thought by many to be a little peculiar. But I am wandering. Inkson and I parted company. He was practical; I was theoretical. The combination didn’t mix well. I started alone to solve the problem of life by theory, but I soon found that the realities of life were not only at war with the poetry of existence, but that theory is generally knocked out in the first round in the contest with practice. I settled down and went to work, but in an evil hour met my fate; fell dangerously sick. I had the most virulent attack of love-fever you ever saw. It was so severe that for a time I became insane. I wrote rhymes and love-letters in ardent, burning words which told my idol that her image was photographed upon my brain; that if I had as many heads and tongues as Mohammed’s angel I could not adequately sing her praises; that I heard her voice, like the music of the spheres, in every breeze, in the sighing of the wind and the murmur of the waters; that the whole blue ether vault was one vast mirror which threw back a million reflections of her lovely face; that the virtues, graces, and charms of her character manifested themselves like the unfolding of a beautiful flower; that my love was bounded only by space and as undying as the soul; that with her life would be an unending bliss; without her, a rayless, starless night. Oh,

I had it badly, very badly ; in fact, I am not fully recovered yet. I called upon her frequently. One evening she received me in the sitting-room. She usually received me in the parlor. A man in love has an eye like an eagle, an ear like an Indian. I soon discovered that another admirer had called earlier than I, and the parlor was pre-empted. I discovered this fact from the frequency with which the parlor was visited. I asked what it meant. She said the man in the other room was her sister's company, and that she was entertaining him until the sister, who was out, returned. For a girl, who is disposed to flirt, a sister is a most convenient person to have around. However, she had hardly told me this ere the sister came in accompanied by the man that I had been informed was in the parlor. I fled, not only from the house, but from the town, and I have been fleeing from town to town and from city to city ever since."

"What became of the girl?" asked Arbyght.

"Oh, she is still single, a coquet is like a cluster ring, from which every new admirer takes a brilliant—when they are all gone, nobody cares for the ring, for it no longer has either beauty or value ; but here we are at Chicago. A man named Relvason runs a large shop here ; go there. You will have no difficulty in getting work. I'll meet you there," and before Arbyght could say "good morning," Mr. Castaway had disappeared.

CHAPTER VIII.

AN UNEXPECTED CALLER.

A short, thick-set man, with dull grayish eye, hawk-bill nose and a dirty, sallow complexion, habited in a brown sack coat, not remarkable for the nicety of its fit and rather worse for the wear, pants that were possibly at one time white, shoes that sadly needed repairing, a limp felt hat, and a dirty shirt that the closely-buttoned coat could not wholly conceal, was striding rapidly up and down the platform in the Michigan Southern depot, at Chicago, when the morning train from the East came to a final stop.

The passengers poured out of the cars and passed eagerly toward the street entrance, among whom was Richard Arbyght, who began to experience a new sensation. He was in a strange city, with no previously defined plan of action to guide his movements; undecided where to go, or what to do, he was for the moment like a mariner in mid-ocean without a compass, and overhead a cloudy sky.

He neither appeared nor felt amiable. Detaching himself from the crowd, he strode down the platform in a lonesome, meditative mood. In turning round suddenly at the end of the depot, he came face to face with the seedy-looking individual above described. A half-suppressed exclamation burst involuntarily from the lips of the stranger, but Richard, buried in the solitude of his thoughts, heeded it not, nor did he notice the man or the startled expression which his own appearance clearly occasioned. Reaching the upper end of the platform, Richard passed out into the street, entered an omnibus, and gave directions to be driven

to a hotel, where he engaged temporary quarters. Being weary he immediately sought his room, to secure a few hours rest, before exploring the city; but he had not been in the room ten minutes before there was a knock at the door. Opening it he was confronted by a colored bell-boy, with a broad grin on his countenance, as though his errand was a funny one.

"What do you want?" asked Richard, in a rather gruff tone, as the bell-boy stood eyeing him in blank and silent wonder.

"Tha-ar-ares a—a gentleman below who wishes to see you," said the boy, stammeringly, but with a significant grin, as he emphasized the word gentleman.

"A gentleman wishes to see me, did you say?"

"Yes, sir."

"Impossible!" exclaimed Richard. "I am an entire stranger here."

"P'r'aps you are, and p'r'aps you ain't," replied the boy, with a curious leer.

The look rather than the remark roused Richard's ire, which was only manifested, however, by a scowl.

"Well?" queried the bell-boy.

"Well," replied Richard, "why don't you show him up? Why do you stare at me as if I was a seven-headed murderer?"

"P'r'aps you are," muttered the boy, as he beat a hasty retreat to the ground floor.

"Well, this is queer, singularly queer," soliloquized Richard, after the boy had departed. "I am not acquainted, as far as I know, with a person in this city. I never met a man who claimed Chicago as his home, and here I am scarcely a half hour in the place, and have a caller. It is strange, decidedly strange."

"Here's the gentleman," interrupted the bell-boy, as he threw open the door, emphasizing again the word gentleman.

Arbyght looked up and saw the man who seemed to recognize him at the depot. Each shrank instinctively from the other. Richard could not tell why he recoiled; but he felt as if he was in the midst of a pestilence.

"Pardon me, sir, for obtruding myself upon you," said the stranger, in an explanatory but courteous manner, "but I saw you at the depot, and your face very forcibly reminded me of a man I knew many years ago, and in whom I was much interested; so I took the liberty to call upon you, to ascertain if my surmises were correct. I hope, sir, you will not consider it an intrusion," he added, with an ingratiating smile.

"Might I ask whom I have the honor of addressing?" said Richard.

"Oh, certainly, sir. I am Jack Terwillager, at your service."

"Jack Terwillager," repeated Richard, with measured slowness. "I think I have heard that name before. Let me see; did you ever live in Silverville, Pennsylvania?"

Terwillager moved uneasily and his sallow face turned a deathly pallor.

Richard noticed the change, and eyed him keenly.

"No—I—did not," replied Terwillager in a hesitating tone; "I was never in Pennsylvania," he added, with more firmness and deliberation; "but why do you ask?"

"Merely because the name sounds familiar," said Richard; "a man named Jack Terwillager worked for my father twenty-odd years ago."

Terwillager sprang up, seized his hat, and rushed

from the room, exclaiming in an audible whisper, as he fled, "'t is he! 't is he!'"

Richard stood rooted to the spot with surprise and astonishment. What did it all mean? The operations of the human mind are very eccentric at times. Now and then an idea or impression will flash unexpectedly through the brain; the specters of buried thoughts will oft rise unbidden before us; and again, when perhaps we most need or desire the mind to act in a certain direction, it fails us. Memory, the divinest attribute of the mind, has ever been coquettish. She will frequently bring before us, painfully vivid, things we would much rather be not called upon to contemplate; and again, when we most desire her aid, she is very apt to mislead us, or fail us altogether.

It was thus with Richard Arbyght. While he was confronted by Terwillager, the thought of his murdered father never entered his mind; but his seedy visitor had barely made his unceremonious and unexpected exit, ere the idea that he was in some manner connected with, or had some knowledge of his father's murder came to him like a flash. He rushed down stairs, but Terwillager had left the hotel. He went out on the street, and gazed eagerly in every direction, but his visitor was not visible. Had he vanished into thin air, he could not have disappeared more suddenly and effectually. Returning to the hotel, Arbyght interrogated the clerks, the porters, the bell-boys, and the guests of the house, but no one had seen the person described pass out.

Richard had always attributed the death of his mother and sister to the murder of his father; hence, it was not at all singular if he cherished the thought of eventually bringing to justice the rob-

ber-assassin who was the cause of his early orphanage, the death of his sister, his defective and deficient education, and all the subsequent ills that burdened him because of these afflictions. He did not cherish a desire for revenge. He felt that that alone would not be compensation for a wrong beyond human repair; but still he believed his mission on earth would not be accomplished until justice was done him, as the sole survivor of a family most foully and terribly wronged. His chagrin, therefore, at allowing Terwillager to escape him without leaving a clue to his whereabouts, may be easily imagined. He consoled himself, however, with the reflection that he had discovered at least something tangible from which a clue might be obtained.

CHAPTER IX.

JEALOUSY INSPIRES A REVELATION.

“I tell you I will not endure it any longer; your conduct is unbearable. I have borne it patiently as long as I care to, and now I am determined that henceforth you shall occupy your proper position in this house, or leave it.”

The speaker was a woman, and she spoke in a sharp, commanding, and insulting tone. She was evidently in a fearful rage, a condition into which her intense nervous temperament frequently plunged her. She was very fair, with one exception—a rather narrow, wedge-like forehead. She had dark, hazel eyes, dark hair and aquiline features. That she was beautiful was the general opinion of

the majority of the male society in which she moved. Ordinarily, she wore a serene and placid look, but there is a fearful difference between appearance and reality, and Estella Relvason was no exception to the rule, for she inherited a temper that at times broke through the barriers of social restraint with impetuous and turbulent fury.

The woman whom she addressed in rude, bitter terms had just entered the room, but stopped and regarded her cousin—for such was the relationship they were supposed to bear to each other—with a look of bewildered surprise. She was an entirely different type of woman. Slight, graceful, and spirituelle, the face sweet and confiding, the forehead high and arched; her hair, a beautiful golden chestnut, was thrown back and covered with graceful abandon shoulders of matchless symmetry and whiteness, like a sheet of broken sunlight. With a mute, appealing look in her mild, blue eyes, she formed a pleasant and lovely contrast to her companion.

“Why, cousin, what have I done?” she said, in a timid and faltering tone.

“Don’t ask me what you have done; I hate your duplicity,” was the answer.

“Cousin Estella, what do you mean?”

“You will please stop calling me cousin. It is about time to put an end to this masquerading. I am not your cousin,” was the unfeeling reply.

“Not my cousin?”

“No!” with emphasis.

“Then who am I?” said Grace, with blanched cheek and bated breath.

“I do not know, and I do not care,” was the heartless answer.

Grace sank into a chair and covered her face with her hands. No sound escaped from her lips,

but through the delicate fingers tears fell rapidly, while her companion looked at her with illy-concealed triumph.

Suddenly, as if moved by a quickly-formed purpose, the weeping girl arose to her feet, dashed the tears from her eyes, and stood before the beautiful virago, the very impersonation of stateliness and independence.

"Well, are you not satisfied?"

"No," said Grace, "I am not satisfied of anything, but that you are jealous of me without cause, and that you mean me no good."

"Then I will convince you, Miss Grace," said Estella sneeringly, and she arose, and going to an escritoire standing in one corner of the room, took from it a faded envelope and letter, which she handed to Grace, saying:

"Is that Aunt Edna's writing?"

Grace examined it and said: "Yes, this is her writing."

"Well, read the letter then and be convinced."

Grace took the letter from its faded receptacle with a trembling hand and read the following:

CLEVELAND, OHIO, May 7, 18—.

Dear Brother: You ask who is the child I wish you to take under your protection in case I should not survive my present illness. In reply, I would say, she is nobody, merely the daughter of some mechanic whose name I have forgotten. I took a fancy to the child and adopted her. She has no living relative that I am aware of. Her people will never trouble you, for she has none.

Your sister,

EDNA RELVASON.

ALVAN RELVASON, Chicago, Ill.

When Grace had finished reading it, she threw it upon the floor contemptuously and said, with a firmness that revealed an unexpected strength and force of womanly character :

“ I see I have been living a false life, I will do so no longer. For the information you have given me, I thank you. My life has been aimless, useless ; but there is yet time to atone for the past. In the hollow, glittering cast in which I have been playing a part, there will be a vacancy which doubtless you can fill. I have no name, no home, no friend, but the Friend of the friendless ; but not for all your father’s wealth, or the splendor and luxury of his home, would I this moment change places with you. Poverty has no terrors for a brave soul. Wealth can not improve a defective character, and happiness is more dependent upon good thoughts, noble deeds, and a pure heart than the possession of great wealth, which is only used to purchase a standing that individual merit can not attain or command.”

The haughty Estella sprang to her feet, her eyes flashing, her face livid, and, with quivering lips, gave vent to the passion that consumed her. But her rage spent its force on the walls and furniture, for Grace had left the room. Half an hour later she left the house forever, arrayed in the plainest dress, hat, and wraps in her wardrobe, and taking with her only a few trinkets of no intrinsic value. She went out into the streets of the great city, friendless and alone, her only armor a pure and unsullied soul, her only protector her God.

She paced the streets at first in a rapid, nervous manner, but as the hours passed, her steps became slow and undecided. She wandered on, on, apparently in search of something, which she found not,

because she knew not what she sought. Twilight succeeded the day, and still she wandered on, but with lagging feet. To her everything seemed like the unreal sequence of a dream. The lamplighter, with ladder and torch in hand, flitted rapidly in a zigzag course through the streets, leaving behind him a faint line of flickering lights, that grew larger and larger as sable night enveloped the city more closely in his dark mantle. Still the nameless, homeless girl walked aimlessly on; but as it grew darker she evidently felt alarmed, and occasionally stopped and looked wistfully around, but nothing met her tear-dimmed eyes but the ever-moving, pushing, hurrying crowd. The same clatter of wheels and confused hum of voices assailed her ears on every side. The crowd pushed and elbowed its way along, regardless of the sad countenance and weary, heavy heart of the now terror-stricken girl.

But she had not been entirely unobserved. A middle-aged, showily-attired woman, with a repellant face, had noticed her and had stealthily followed her for some time. The poor girl, unconscious of danger, continued her wanderings unmindful of the basilisk eyes that so closely watched her every movement.

She finally left the busy thoroughfare and entered a street on which very few people were moving, and these mostly mechanics, who were fast hurrying to their homes after the labors of the day. Before she had proceeded two blocks on this street her feelings overcame her and she burst into tears. She drew her shawl partly over her face to shield from those who passed her uncontrollable emotion. She wept, not for the home she had voluntarily left, but because she knew not what to do, and because she was oppressed with a terrible sense of

utter loneliness. At last she raised her eyes heavenward with an intensely supplicating expression, as though she would fain penetrate, through the black darkness of the night, the ethereal abode of her God, and prayed Him to guide and protect her. She grew calmer after this, and with renewed hope and a lighter heart, was about to move on when a hand was laid lightly on her arm. She started in alarm, and turned quickly around.

"Good evening, Miss," said the woman, who had watched and followed her for half an hour.

The woman spoke sweetly, and in the indistinct light of the street, Grace thought her look was kind and sympathetic.

"Good evening, Madam," said Grace, in return.

"You appear to be in trouble," said the woman.

"Perhaps you are a stranger in the city and have lost your way?" she added by way of inquiry.

Grace looked at the woman and asked herself if it would be safe to trust her; but the look was met by a reassuring smile.

"I am looking for a respectable boarding-house," said Grace, adroitly evading the woman's pointed inquiry.

"Why, my dear, it seems a sort of providential arrangement that we should meet. I keep a boarding-house only a short distance from here; and none but the very best people board with me. I have just been down town to make some purchases, and I am on my way home now. If you desire, I will accommodate you with a room, although it is contrary to my accustomed rule to take strangers under my roof without the very best of references; but I see you are evidently in trouble, and I can never bear to see any of my own sex suffer when it is in my power to relieve them."

"You are very kind and good," replied Grace;

"indeed you are ; and I hope you will not be offended when I say I am almost afraid to accept your generous offer, for I do not know whom to trust."

"Oh ! I don't blame you," answered the woman. "Of course, I do not want you to accept against your will."

The poor, defenseless girl again raised her eyes heavenward, but answered not.

The woman artfully changed her tactics, and assuming an offended air, said in a reproachful tone :

"I beg your pardon, Miss, I thought I was doing you a favor by offering you shelter ; but I see you do not so regard it. I would scorn to thrust my friendship upon you."

"Good evening," and she turned as if to leave her.

"Oh ! don't go," said Grace, her suspicions disarmed. "Do not leave me. I am sorry if I offended you. I will go with you and trust you. Why should I fear?" she added, "God will protect me."

The woman bit her lips, but remained silent, and they proceeded down the street together.

Beware ! Grace, beware ! In woman's darkest hour, when the hand of sorrow is heaviest, if she walks in the shadow of suspicion, she may receive sympathy from man, but rarely from her own sex.

CHAPTER X.

AT WORK.

The morning after his arrival in Chicago Arbyght concluded to explore the city in search of work. Before he was ready to start, however, there was a knock at his door, and before he had time to say "come in," the door opened and Mr. Castaway stepped into the room.

"Good morning, Arbyght," he said, in a cheery, pleasant voice, "you see I don't stand on ceremony. It would be a waste of time to send up a card, besides I didn't have the card; I knew you would be glad to see me, and here I am."

"I am indeed glad to see you," replied Richard.

"Have you secured work yet?"

"No; I was just about to start out on that mission as you came in."

"Well, my boy, I'm in luck—secured a berth at Fargood's, the squarest man in the city. I went directly there from the depot. I hardly thought I would succeed, as Fargood don't like tramps; he has introduced the profit-sharing system and wants only steady men."

"I think he is right," said Arbyght, who by this time had taken a more careful survey of Mr. Castaway.

It was not difficult to place him. There was the ineffaceable stamp of the nomad on his face, and in his bearing and general appearance. Not the ragged, unkempt creature that serves as a common model for a description of the genus tramp; but a well-built, good-natured, sharp-eyed modern Ishmaelite; wise in an experience of the world and

its ways, and the people that live in it; one of those who preferred to float with every breeze, rather than be held at anchorage in the most pleasant harbor. Though his garments detracted from his appearance, yet his easy, self-assured bearing, made Richard more interested in the wearer than in his apparel.

"Yes, Mr. Fargoood is right," mused Castaway. "If I had not succeeded there, my mission here would be to bid you good-bye."

"Why?" asked Richard.

"I've been investigating; taking the lay of the land, as it were, and I found that the employers here want a man to work fourteen hours a day. They pay small wages, only half of which is cash, the balance being in orders upon stores which they own or control. They contract to give you milk, but before you receive it, by this patent process of store pay, they extract the cream."

"But why do the men submit to such an outrage?"

"Why, bless your soul, my boy, they can't help it. Most of them have families, and they can never save enough to get away. When a man's wages barely suffice to buy poor food and worse clothes for his family, it's adding insult to injury to tell him to go west and grow up with the country."

"I must admit there is much force in your reasoning, Mr. Castaway."

"Call me Tom, if you please."

"All right, Tom. I like your candor, at all events. But is there not some remedy for the evils which you say exist here?"

"Well, I have never given the subject very serious thought, but it seems to me that there must be. You see, I being free to go where I please, this problem has never pressed itself upon me

so closely as to demand solution. When wages and conditions don't suit me, I skip. When I tire of walking, I find a friendly brakeman an angel in disguise, and a box-car a palace. Rye bread is more toothsome to a hungry man than the daintiest dish to a dyspeptic whose liver needs repairing, and there is more warmth in the coarse, homespun coat that covers a happy, contented man, than in the fur-lined garment of the man whose shoulders are bent under a weight of care and trouble."

"But can a man be happy who is exhausted by toil that does not produce sufficient food to keep his physical forces in normal condition?" interrupted Arbyght.

"Oh, I'm only speaking for myself. I admit if all men were to do as I do the race would soon die out. I know it's man's highest duty to reproduce his species, but present conditions have a tendency to destroy that sentiment. As things are now, every workingman who has the courage to marry and raise a family, should have his memory perpetuated by a brazen cenotaph or marble monument."

"I think, my friend, you are disposed to take rather a gloomy view of the situation."

"Don't prejudge my sentiments—wait until you have wrestled with the wage giant. You will find him a muscular fellow and sturdy athlete!" replied Castaway, with some warmth.

"I don't doubt that," said Arbyght; "but I do contend that the genius and intelligence of this age, when once rightly directed, will, by moral force alone, compel men to deal justly with each other; and when mankind recognizes justice as a supreme law, the evils which crush labor will disappear."

"Well put and finely said, my friend, but when the justice you say that will be born of intelligence

gets ready to do battle with selfishness, I want to be on hand and have a front seat. It will be a very interesting contest ; but I did not call to chop logic. I wanted to renew our acquaintance. I'll go with you, if you have no objection. I know where all the shops are." Richard thanked him, and they started out together.

Arbyght did not experience any difficulty in securing work, although trade was rather dull and the supply of labor greater than the demand.

He secured a berth in the shop of Alvan Relvason, generally rated as one of the "solidest" in the Chicago Board of Trade. He was a heavy pork-packer, had a large interest in several lard refineries, and employed directly and indirectly over five hundred men. He had also a controlling interest in several grocery and dry-goods stores, on which he frequently gave orders to his employés, in partial or full payment for their services.

Richard's second acquaintance in the city was the foreman of the shop in which he had secured work. Felix Rulless, the foreman, was a man of rather pleasing manner, but was eccentric and vacillating, traits of character that were acquired, not natural. They were doubtless the result of earnest, persistent effort to please his employer and the men under him at the same time.

Had Alvan Relvason been an employer possessed of a just conception of the rights of his workmen, or had he been less tyrannical and exacting, Felix Rulless would have been a different man ; or had there been less of the milk of human kindness in the composition of the gray-haired foreman, these traits would not have become a part of his nature.

Young Arbyght was very favorably received and kindly treated by Rulless. He was won by

Richard's frank, genial manner, and did all he could to render Arbygth's first appearance among strange shopmates as pleasant as possible. Ruleless not only secured Richard a quiet and respectable boarding-house, but took a strong and friendly interest in the "young man from Philadelphia," as some of the men in the shop facetiously termed him.

For the first few days nothing transpired out of the usual routine of shop life. On the fourth day after Richard's arrival in the shop, an incident occurred, which, though casual and apparently of no moment, still had a deep effect upon his mind. The men had been working hard all day, and, as it was drawing to a close, they evidently seemed to rejoice that the time for rest was at hand. They entered more generally into conversation, and the younger men became quite hilarious. The older men did not join them, but evidently enjoyed the witty remarks and jokes of their younger associates. They seemed to forget in the humor of the moment the fatigues of the day. They seemed to have instinctively discovered that a light heart lessens labor. Suddenly, as if an earthquake had split open the earth and swallowed the shop and inmates, the noise ceased, and the men became mute. The songs were broken off abruptly, jokes and puns half-uttered were smothered with a suppressed cough, the hum of voices ceased, and a calm settled down upon the shop. This sudden cessation of sound startled Richard, and he looked around in wonderment, but could see no cause for the strange proceeding. He, however, noticed a man in the middle shop, his right foot resting on a shaving-horse, the elbow of his right arm resting on the raised knee. He was leisurely smoking a large briar-root pipe, and

was regarding our hero with a sharp, penetrating stare.

Richard looked at the newcomer closely, as he at once divined who he was. He knew now what caused the sudden muteness of the men, as he became satisfied that he saw the proprietor of the shop.

The latter approached Richard and said in a blunt, rough manner, "Are you a stranger in the city?"

"I am, sir," said Richard, coolly but politely.

The tone of the answer seemed to offend his highness, and he said, with curt sharpness:

"How long have you been here?"

"Four days, sir," replied Richard, with the same imperturbable gravity of expression.

"What's your name?"

"Richard Arbyght."

"Richard what?"

"Arbyght, sir."

"The devil——"

"No, sir—Arbyght," said Richard, in the same quiet manner.

"Where did you come from?"

"Philadelphia," replied Richard, cool as ever.

"Young man, you must be more respectful when talking to me. I am owner of these shops. Please remember that fact. Do you hear?"

"I do, sir. Your relation to these shops I surmised the moment I saw you; and, sir, if I have not shown you the deference and respect due your position, it is because my conception of the amenities of society and the deference one man should show to another is defective, although it has never been so regarded before."

"You are quite an orator," said Relvason, with a sneer, which was not lost upon Richard, who replied ironically:

"You are quite complimentary; thank you, sir."

Rulless put in an appearance at this stage in the conversation, and shook his head suggestively at Richard; but the latter's blood was up, and he stood like a stag at bay, waiting for the next attack.

"I like your impudence, young man, but while you remain in my employ I wish you to remember that you are the employed, and I the employer."

"Where shall I store the surplus stock?" said Rulless, in a vain effort to break off the conversation.

But Richard was not to be choked off. He folded his sinewy, muscular arms, and, looking his employer unflinchingly in the face, said:

"Mr. Relvason, I would be very sorry to be considered impudent to any one, much less to a man between whom and myself there should exist friendly relations; but the fact that I am the employed and you the employer, does not in itself make you superior or me inferior. I shall always endeavor to perform my duties honestly, and will show you that respect which your conduct toward me demands."

"You are a dangerous man, sir; a fire-brand that must be extinguished," said Relvason, and he left the shop with knit brows and a scowling visage.

"For God's sake," said Rulless, "don't talk that way again."

"Why not?" Richard replied, "have I said aught but the truth? Am I less a man simply because I earn my food and clothes by manual labor?"

"Truth or not, such language will not take here," said Rulless. "Your sentiments are mine exactly, but such ideas will wither and die in the

barren soil and vitiated atmosphere of this locality ; and not only that, but entail destruction on the sower."

"Well, my good friend," said Richard, "your soil needs fertilizing, and your atmosphere purifying ; and the sooner it is done the better it will be for all concerned."

Rulless was called away before he had time to reply ; and when he returned to the shop again, he informed the workmen that thereafter no more loud talking or singing would be permitted. This he said was the direct order of Mr. Relvason.

The men were naturally indignant, and muttered and grumbled loudly. Some even indulged in appellatives that were anything but flattering to their employer.

Richard muttered the word—"slaves!" through his clenched teeth, as he heard the order given by the foreman. The storm blew over, however ; but from that hour Arbyght was the hero of the shop, and this incident, although trivial in itself, was but the "beginning of the end."

Alvan Relvason was considered by many persons a remarkable man. He was of medium stature, but very stout and heavy. His head was large, and covered with a very forest of coarse, black hair ; his neck was massive, and his beard, which covered almost his entire face, was as coarse and black as his hair ; his complexion was of a dusky, swarthy cast that never appeared clear or clean ; his eyes were set deep in his head, and were black, restless, and cunning ; his gait was awkward and ungainly, and his clothes, though of the best material, looked as if they had been made for some one else. He had received a college education, and was a man of considerable ability. He was recognized in financial circles as

a keen, cool, and thorough business man. The whole force of his ability, however, was subordinated at all times and under all circumstances to a gross and brutal selfishness, which had for its sole object the advancement of Alvan Relvason. He did not hesitate to do anything that would further his ends, and in working to promote them all the powers of his mind and body were blended in perfect unison. Money was his creed, self his god. Woe to the man or men who attempted to thwart or oppose him, for he was a tireless, unrelenting, and unfeeling enemy.

Mr. Relvason's head clerk and confidential adviser was also a person of some note, at least such was his own opinion; and as he will enter more or less into the warp and woof of our story, he will be descriptively introduced at this time.

Charles Spindle was also a man of medium stature, but slender. His head was small, his eyes a cold, dull gray, his nose sharp and long. A straggling, sickly-looking, straw-colored moustache, that matched the color of his hair, adorned his thin, bloodless upper-lip, and served to break the blank, monotonous aspect of his sallow face. His eyes, however, were the most remarkable thing about this otherwise insignificant specimen. At times they would flash fire and reveal glimpses of the inner man, of which the casual observer would not dream, and again appear as dull and expressionless as the optics of a cat at mid-day. At such times they seemed to recede into his head and hold communion with his soul, although the men in the shop frequently expressed the opinion that Spindle had no soul. He was in every respect a fit servitor for his master.

The Saturday following the events above narrated was "pay-day," so termed by Spindle,

though the men in the shop differed with him as to the appropriateness of the term.

About mid-day Richard noticed Spindle going from man to man, and apparently holding with each a short conversation. While he was still thinking of this strange proceeding on the part of the usually reserved and pompous clerk, Spindle stepped up to him and said :

"Your name is Arbyght, I believe?"

"Your belief is not unfounded," said Richard.

"Ah!" exclaimed Spindle, and his dull eyes began to glow.

"Well, Arbyght, how much money do you want to-day?" he exclaimed; and opening a small memorandum book, he took therefrom a pencil with which he made a gentle flourish, preparatory to putting down the amount.

"How much money do I want?" said Richard, repeating the question, as if doubtful of its import.

"Yes, Arbyght; how much money do you need to-day?" repeated Spindle.

"Spindle—I beg your pardon—*Mr.* Spindle," with an emphasis on the *Mr.*, which the chief clerk did not fail to notice, "I need all that I have earned; all that is due me."

"We don't generally pay in full until the end of every third month, *Mr.* Arbyght," replied Spindle, with a frown.

"You don't?"

"Have I not said so?"

"Oh, yes, you have said so; but let me ask you a question, please."

"Certainly."

"Well," said Richard, "you pay in full only every three months; are we to be deprived of the use of our money during that time?"

“Only part of it.”

“But,” continued Richard, “you take my only salable commodity—my labor—you sell its product, and have the use of the money, profit and all, and then seek to deprive me of the use of part of my wages, and use it for your own advantage; now that is not fair. Have I not the right to husband and keep my labor until it is paid for?”

“You have, sir; you can leave at once, if the arrangement does not suit you,” was the quiet, but curt reply.

“Very well, pay me my wages, and I shall do so at once.”

“Come to the office this afternoon, then,” said Spindle; and, livid with rage, he turned and left the shop.

Rulless interposed, and had the difficulty amicably settled. He represented to Relvason the great acquisition that Richard was to the shop, because of his superior workmanship and steady habits; and the unpleasantness ended in Arbyght being paid in full and specially requested to remain.

Richard had not seen Spindle previous to their meeting in the shop, although he had frequently heard of him; but when he saw him he was filled with an intuitive aversion for him; for, being an unconscious physiognomist, he read the man, and arrived at a correct estimate of his character.

Spindle, on the other hand, disliked Arbyght from the start, with the hatred of a mean nature that is balked in its assumption; and the retention of Richard he construed as a slight to himself, and from that hour he was an enemy, without reservation.

CHAPTER XI.

SELF-PROTECTION A FIRST LAW.

That evening, as young Arbyght wended his way in solemn silence to his only home, a boarding-house, he lapsed into a meditative mood. He generally walked the streets with a measured precision that arrested the attention of the shop-keepers and other inhabitants of the streets through which he passed. His gait was not slow, nor yet was it fast ; it was not awkward, nor yet was it stately. His step was firm, solid, and indicative of a determined, resolute will. There was another peculiarity specially noticeable in the man. When on the street he seemed completely wrapped up in his own individuality. His most intimate acquaintance could, at times, pass and repass him unobserved. He appeared oblivious and unconscious of everything except the ghostly shapes and forms born of his own imagination.

On the evening in question his mind was unusually reflective, and, among other things, the condition of his fellow-craftsmen in different parts of the country arose involuntarily before him, and, like a deadly incubus, sat heavily upon his soul.

He reached home in an unenviable state of mind. He ate his supper in silence, and then went out into the street again. He walked down town and entered one of the stores in which Relvason owned an interest.

He had barely entered when a woman came in. She was plainly, almost shabbily, but neatly attired. On her sad, fretted, careworn face still lingered traces of a mild beauty. She approached a clerk, who apparently did not notice her, and po-

lately bade him good evening. He not recognizing her, she approached nearer and timidly asked if he had any butter.

"Have you any money?" said the young brute, without raising his eyes from the evening paper.

"No, sir; but I have an order," and she produced a crumpled slip of soiled paper.

"You have tried that game before. Now get out of here. You should know by this time that we give nothing on orders but what we can obtain on credit ourselves."

The poor woman turned to leave the store, and Richard saw her struggle to keep down a sob that surged up from her overcharged heart. He followed and hailed her kindly. She raised her head, and in the dim light of the street he saw her eyes were filled with tears.

"My good woman," he said, soothingly, "please let me see that order."

She handed it to him. It called for two dollars. He thrust a bill into her hand, and put the order in his pocket.

"God bless you," said the woman, fervently, "you little know what good you have done my poor sick children." But Richard did not hear her, as he had turned and re-entered the store before she had time to utter her thanks.

Another customer, also a woman, came in soon after. She was also plainly attired; but there was a subdued dignity in her bearing and manner which clearly indicated that she had been respectably reared. She also produced an order, and began to make some small purchases. When nearly through, she asked for some article which the clerk said was not in the store.

"I need it badly," she said.

"Can't be helped," retorted the clerk.

"Could you not give me an order on some other store?" she asked.

"We don't do business in that way," he replied.

"Well, give me the money, then," she said, with some warmth. "I need money very much, as baby is sick, and there is a prescription at home that was left by the doctor two days ago, that I could not get filled because we had no money in the house."

"Money; ha! ha!" and he laughed contemptuously. "Why, you brazen-faced——"

What more he intended to say remained unsaid, for just then the woman's husband entered the store, and, hearing his wife so grossly insulted, stopped not to count the cost or consequences, but, with a blow delivered straight from the shoulder, felled the ill-bred wretch to the floor.

"Oh, Henry! what have you done?" said the wife.

"Served the contemptible coward right," replied Henry Trustgood, as he moved toward the door.

Richard, who had advanced to remonstrate with the clerk, was taken completely by surprise, as Trustgood had entered unobserved. He recognized him at once as one of his shopmates, and one for whom he had formed a strong attachment, which was fully reciprocated.

"I must say, that in all my experience and observation, I never saw a finer or more forcible blow so tellingly delivered," was a remark that caused Richard to turn, and brought him face to face with his irrepressible acquaintance, Tom Castaway.

"How are you, shopmate?" said Castaway, "I'm glad to see you. The moral to be drawn from what has just occurred is, don't marry until social conditions improve."

Further conversation was cut off by the appearance of an officer, who had been summoned by one of the employés, who ran into the street and cried, "Police!" at the top of his voice, just as Trustgood struck the clerk. The valiant defender of the majesty of the law advanced slowly and cautiously until informed that no dangerous element was about, when he marched quickly and bravely to the front, and actually arrested the defenseless Trustgood.

Richard determined to extricate his friend if possible. He therefore, accompanied by Castaway, went with Henry and his weeping wife to the station house. He told the officer in charge that Henry was not to blame; that he was unduly exasperated by a gross insult offered to his wife, and acted under intense excitement. These points, eloquently argued, and a deposit of fifteen dollars to defray "probable" costs, effected Henry's release. Before separating that night, Richard requested Henry, Castaway, and another shopmate they happened to meet, to call at his room the following afternoon. At the appointed time they were all on hand, and for three hours secretly discussed the condition of labor, and the best means of improving the status of wage-workers. They spoke in low tones, for they well knew that even in this boasted land of the free, the Sons of Labor are not at all times or under all circumstances free agents. Two of the reformers, Arbyght and Castaway, were men of great natural ability and considerable intelligence. By the force of inherited mentality, and by the aid of books and newspapers, they had gained a knowledge of social and economic science seldom attained by the ordinary college graduate. While they were not finished scholars by any means, yet by self-exertion and natural genius

they had become, in a certain sense, educated men in spite of the hard environment of their boyhood days. The conclusion reached was that the solution of the problem could only be reached through effective organization and the moral force it could be made to exert.

"If all men and women whose bread is acquired by their own labor," said Arbygth, "could be made to act jointly and in harmony, as if moved by one common impulse, upon all matters affecting their interests, present evils would vanish, because the moral force of such organized effort would be irresistible."

"Better laws would in that event be enacted," suggested Trustgood.

"Laws!" broke in Castaway, "we have too much law. The wise statesman is the man who labors harder to repeal bad laws than he does to enact experiments into legal forms. Laws have tamed man it is true, but he starves notwithstanding the law. Between the savage and nature there were no legal restrictions, and yet the savage starved less often than the man whom the law has made tame. I don't want to abolish law for that would plunge us back into barbarism, but we must do as Arbygth suggests, for by that means only will all men be alike benefited by law."

"I am not sure but you are right, Tom," said Arbygth; "though such views are liable to be misunderstood. We must take man as we find him. Selfishness is his predominant characteristic, and yet it is the main-spring of human activity. But if you can convince a man that he will be benefited by being just to his fellow-man, you appeal to his selfishness by a different process."

"I catch your meaning, Arbygth," interposed Castaway; "if it were possible to convince old

Relvason that he could not secure other or new men if his present force left him, he would rather realize half the profit he is now making than lose it all ; isn't that it ? ”

“ Certainly, ” replied Arbyght, “ though I must say I think thorough organization will eventually so intellectualize labor as to enable it to so impress public opinion that justice to all men will spring from purer and higher motives. ”

“ Perhaps you are right, ” answered Castaway, “ but do you think these purer and higher motives will ever find lodgment in the stony heart of your employer ? ”

“ Well, hardly ; but, thank God, all men are not like him. There is Mr. Fargoood, for instance ”——

“ Yes, but where you find one Fargoood you find an hundred Relvasons, ” again broke in Castaway.

“ That may be true, but a short time ago there was not even one Fargoood—you see, there is some evidence, at least, of the tendency of society to evolve better conditions ; besides, I have faith that the better and purer elements of man's nature can be made to dominate his selfish and baser passions. At present capital is king, and the king never heard but half the truth, and heeded only half of that which he heard. I believe there must be some peaceable means of impressing the whole truth upon the capitalist and convincing him that it is to his interest to heed it. Labor has grievances that directly appeal to the heart of the humane man, and is it not possible to humanize the capitalist by the force of educated public opinion ? ”

“ Well, boys, ” said Castaway, “ I'm for organization. Let's begin at once. But let me say to you men who have incumbrances—bad sign, boys, when you have to call olive branches incum-

brances—that you must be cautious and careful. Tom Castaway can change location without the aid of a moving wagon or locomotive, you can't; however, I am sure you can't be worse off than you are. I'll stay and help the thing along, even if I have to remain six months; and boys, that's a great sacrifice."

The conference ended. A few days afterward every reliable cooper in the city had placed in his hand a sealed envelope containing a printed slip, which read:

"Mr. —, you are hereby requested to meet many more of your fellow-workingmen at St. George's Hall, South Clark street, on Wednesday evening of this week. Believing you to be a man of honor we have trusted you this far, and as we have placed confidence in you, we hope you will not betray that confidence, but will, whether you appear or not, keep this matter a profound secret, and destroy this paper as soon as you have read it.

"(Signed)

"REFORM.

"JUSTICE.

"EQUAL RIGHTS.

"FAIR PLAY."

CHAPTER XII.

THE OTHER SIDE.

"Marseilles, a fact to be strongly smelt and tasted, lay broiling in the sun one day," wrote Dickens in "Little Dorrit;" but though southern France is baked by midsummer's scorching heat, it is doubtful if Marseilles ever broils more fiercely

than does the Isle of Manhattan in the sweltering days of August.

Thirty years ago New York, "a fact to be strongly smelt and tasted, lay broiling in the sun one day." It was August; a dead calm afternoon, neither zephyr, inland breeze, nor ocean wind stirred the hot, shimmering air; the red walls of the tall brick buildings glared in the white burning sunlight; the fiery brick walks reflected back the dazzling rays that shone upon them. In the lower portion of the city, in the narrow squalid streets, walled in by tenement houses that seemed to pierce the heavens, strange as it may appear, human beings breathed this air and lived.

Out on one of these streets, reeking with noxious exhalations and miasmatic poison, crouching and cowering in the foot or two of shade next to the hot walls of the buildings, were long lines of ragged children, whose pinched faces were like "a ghastly caricature of age"—old and worn, though young in years—older in appearance at ten than they should be at twenty. Was this the result of post-natal causes? In the main, no. The infant is to a large extent a revelation of the life and habits of the parents. It is the ill-fed, over-worked and half-clothed mother who gives birth to the child whose face is "a ghastly caricature of age." The accumulated wrongs, hardships and privations of the ancestor leave their hideous and damning impress upon posterity; and to ante-natal conditions could be mainly attributed the causes that made the faces of these children a mockery of childhood.

Hugging the wall, crouching in the shade of each other, these half-naked boys and girls sweltered and panted as they vainly tried to get a mouthful of air. Back in the alleys and in the dark,

close, hot halls of the buildings their mothers were smothering and suffocating in the same vain attempt to catch a mouthful of air. And out on the parched streets or in shops like ovens, their fathers, bathed in sweat, barely able to stand, worked, and gasped as they toiled, for a mouthful of air.

The millionaire, the banker, the merchant prince, the rich stock-gambler, and the wealthy employer of labor did not broil in New York that day. Far away from the overcrowded, unhealthy tenement districts of the great metropolis; far away from the pent-up, illy-ventilated, and unhealthy homes of New York's poor, the representatives of New York's aggregation of dollars were indulging in luxurious recreation. At Newport, whose cliffs are fanned by ocean breezes; at Saratoga, where their cheeks were cooled by balmy winds, fresh from the birch and balsam forests of the north; in the cities of the old world, or on Alpine passes, New York's rich were enjoying themselves that day, with no thought for those whose labor made it possible.

The day wore slowly away. It dragged and lagged, and the blazing sun seemed to remain stationary, as if another Joshua had gone up from Gilgal to Gibeon. The sun stood still then, and gazed upon a scene of slaughter and carnage; he seemed to stand still on this day and shine down upon greater suffering than he looked upon at Gibeon.

About three o'clock in the afternoon, a meanly dressed, middle-aged man, upon whose face suffering and want had traced deep, ugly lines, was wending his way slowly, languidly up one of the narrow tenement streets. He suddenly staggered, clutched a lamp-post, then fell an inanimate mass across the curb-stone. The children crowding in

the shadows ran to him, some screaming, all frightened. They stood around with open mouths and staring eyes, but speechless tongues. Suddenly a wailing cry arose on the quivering air, and a moment later a young girl, apparently fourteen years of age, sprang through the crowd and threw herself, with a wild, impassioned cry of anguish, down upon her knees by the prostrate body. Many of the women of the neighborhood had gathered by this time. Others, moved either by curiosity or humanity, had also stopped, and one of the latter, comprehending the situation, told them to drench the man's head with water and give him some brandy or other stimulant, while he ran to the next street and summoned a physician. In about ten minutes the physician came and examined the man.

"What is it, doctor?" said one of the men.

"Coup de soleil," replied the man of physic.

"Koo-da-so-laal?" repeated the man who had asked the question, in a skeptical tone, "you may be right, doctor, but blast my eyes, if I don't think it's a clear case of sun-stroke."

"Yes! yes! you are quite right. That is what it is. I might have saved him, had I been here when he fell, but he is past human aid now."

As the physician concluded his remark, William Nullus inhaled his last breath of the stifling air of a city which "lay broiling in the sun that day."

The girl who knelt by his side, sobbing as if her heart would break, was Marcia Nullus, his daughter. When she heard the physician pronounce him beyond help, she ceased crying, raised her eyes heavenward and murmured a prayer, while every head was uncovered, and not a few eyes were moist with tears.

Two men raised the body and carried it up, up, up, higher, still higher, until they reached the seventh story of the crowded block, and carried it into a room about ten feet square—the home of William Nullus and his child. Its furniture consisted of two camp beds, a stove that could be carried under one's arm, two old chairs, a small stand, a piece of mirror, a few tin cups and plates and a tin basin. The room had no windows, and its only light or ventilation was furnished by the transom over the door that opened into the dimly lighted hall. Every room in the building, except those immediately fronting the street, were lighted and ventilated in the same way. The room in spite of its poverty and meanness, however, was scrupulously clean.

The dead man was laid upon one of the cots, and the men went out and left the child and her dead alone. Through the long hours of the night in that close, dark room, sat the child in voiceless, tearless grief—greater because it was voiceless and tearless—keeping vigil over the silent form of him who in life had been a father and loving companion. The following day the body was taken to the Potter's field and buried by the city authorities. There was no friend near the orphan as she saw the clods fill up the grave.

William Nullus, though a skilled mechanic, had been unable to labor efficiently for many years, but he was temperate and had been able to earn enough to keep soul and body together, and dress his daughter semi-respectably. Love for his child was all that sustained him through long years of trouble and sorrow. He watched over her, cared for her, and taught her as best he could. But for Marcia he would have ceased to struggle long before, and joined her whose untimely

death had crushed his heart and left him but the bare semblance of his former self. His child knew this, knew that she was the only tie that bound him to earth, and after the first passionate wave of grief had swept over her young heart, she grew calm and realized that he had gone to join her mother, in that land where care and sorrow are unknown.

After her father's burial, Marcia concluded to leave the city by some means and go into the country to find a home. Filled with this idea, she returned to the block where she lived and began to climb up to her room, to pack up the few little things she wished to take with her. On the first landing she met a sleek-faced, oily-tongued man, who earned a good salary as the agent of some charity mission by distributing tracts, instead of bread and clothes, to the naked and hungry inmates of New York's crowded tenements.

"My dear child," he began, "I have been looking for you. I heard you were left alone, orphaned by the death of your father."

"What is it you want of me?" asked Marcia.

"My mission is one of charity and kindness," he replied. "Our society is about to send some boys and girls out West to good comfortable homes that have been provided for them, and I thought you might like to go."

This was just what Marcia desired most, and she readily assented to the proposition. She ran up to her room and packed what few things she cared to take with her. That night she stayed at the mission, and the next day in company with a hundred or more children—orphans like herself—she was shipped by rail like so much freight to Illinois. When the little colony of waifs reached that State, they were divided into squads, each

under the control of a keeper, and dropped off at different stations and distributed. The squad to which Marcia belonged was left at a station about seventy-five miles from Chicago. Here they were turned over to the township trustees as destitute orphans, and by these trustees bound out to such parties as were willing to pay a certain sum for them, which it was claimed was intended to cover the expense of their transportation from New York. Any person wishing a bound boy or girl could go to the hall where they were exhibited and examine them, as the slave dealer did human chattels in the palmy days of the "divine institution." If one was found that was suitable, the money was paid, the indentures drawn and signed by the trustees for the orphan, after which the master or mistress took the servant home. These indentures were next recorded by the township clerk, and the law thus fulfilled made the act valid and binding.

Marcia was the first one of her party to find a master. She was a handsome child, and one that would attract attention. Within six hours from her arrival in the town she was bound out or indentured to Mr. Caleb Stone, one of the wealthiest farmers in the county, to be held in service by him until she was eighteen years of age.

Farmer Stone's family consisted of himself, daughter, and son. Miss Ursula Stone was twenty years of age. There was nothing in the sharp contour of her face, or the bony, scrawny appearance of her form, to encourage her with the faintest hope that time in his gentlest mood would ever soften its angularity; nor was there anything in her manner to warrant the belief that coming years would sweeten her acidulous temper.

She was mistress of her father's home, however,

and was a veritable, domestic autocrat. The orphan girl was made to realize this in all its force. At first she was content to exercise her power only to keep Marcia fully employed in menial drudgery from early dawn until late at night. The child yielding implicit obedience never murmured or shirked an imposed task, although many a night she was so tired that she could hardly climb up to her room. Two years passed by and Marcia, in spite of the monotonous and weary round of exacting toil, had developed from a beautiful child into a still more beautiful maiden. She did not seem to be aware of it, however; but her mistress, rendered sharp-sighted by her own deficiency in beauty's gifts, saw how fair she was; and to a harsh manner, and illy-regulated temper, she now added a jealousy of her servant as bitter as it was unreasonable.

Life was thus made harder than ever for the orphan girl. This condition continued for over a year. When Marcia was nearly eighteen years of age, driven to a point where anything was preferable to staying where she was, she determined to escape.

Farmer Stone had always been kind to her and was not fully aware of the treatment she daily received. He always spoke a kind word to her when an opportunity offered, and he had given her little sums of money from time to time. Not being allowed to purchase anything for herself, she saved the money thus received, and now when her condition became unendurable, she found herself in possession of means to effect escape from her place of bondage.

To decide was to act, and packing up one night what few things she had, she stole out of the house after the family had retired, and walked rapidly to the station about a mile distant.

Just as she arrived there, the midnight express for Chicago came dashing up. Unnoticed, she entered a car and before she could realize it, the station lights disappeared in the dim distance, as the train rushed along in its rapid flight. She was adrift again, and had only a vague idea of what she would do when she reached Chicago. She thought, in a general way, that it would be easy to get work in a great city. Arriving in this American "Babylon," just as the dawn gave faint tokens of its approach, the effect of her transition from the Illinois farm-house to a great city became at once apparent. She stepped from the car, stood for a moment irresolute, undecided, and bewildered by the din and clamor around her. Seeing a policeman at a distance, she made her way to him through the crowd, and, in a timid but modest manner, said :

"I am a stranger in the city ; can you direct me to a respectable place, where I can get lodgings? "

The officer, a kind-hearted and close-observing man, seeing at a glance that Marcia was a stranger and a worthy person, placed her in charge of another policeman, and directed him where to take her. Going with this officer, she was soon domiciled in a respectable place, and before the sun was up was sleeping the deep sleep of youth and health, without thought of what the days to come had in store for her.

CHAPTER XIII.

HER BEAUTY HER RUIN.

The sun was shining brightly when Marcia awoke with a start; her first thought was that she had overslept herself—not realizing for a moment that she had placed herself beyond the reach of the voice that had so long summoned her to daily tasks; but as a sense of her changed condition stole over her, she was filled with a delicious sense of freedom and rest.

She thought over the incidents of her flight, and her indistinct plans for the future. Realizing that her little stock of money would not last long, she determined to seek employment at once. She was now alone, indeed—alone in a great city, where every one was pushing to get in front. Nearly eighteen years of age, fatherless, motherless, and friendless, with a beauty which was her greatest source of danger, she was preparing to learn in the bitter school of experience how cold and cheerless, for an unprotected woman, is this world of ours.

After eating some dinner, she secured a morning paper, and among the lists of “wants” she saw an advertisement for sewing girls.

Marcia was a deft seamstress, and she felt hopeful of securing a place. Encouraged by this thought, she started out at once in search of the establishment. She soon found it, and entering the main office, made known her errand to one of the clerks, who conducted her to the private office of the firm.

Entering it in a timid manner, she saw the junior partner seated at a writing desk. He

looked up and eyed her keenly, as a purchaser would a horse.

"What can I do for you, Miss?" he said, after he had completed his inspection.

"I thought, perhaps, you could give me some work to do," said Marcia, in a modest and hesitating tone.

"What can you do?"

"I can do plain sewing and run a sewing machine quite well," she replied.

Turning to his desk, he wrote a few lines on a slip of paper and handing it to her, said:

"Well, we will give you a trial. You can commence to-morrow. We require our help to be on hand at a quarter to seven in the morning, and to commence work sharply at seven. Give that note to the foreman of the shirt-room in the morning and he will set you to work."

Grateful for the chance afforded her to earn something, and with eyes glistening with gratitude, Marcia thanked him and withdrew. In her ignorance, for despite her early surroundings, she was pure and uncontaminated, she did not notice or understand the bold look of admiration he bestowed upon her, as he scanned her lovely face and the graceful outlines of a form which her plain attire could not conceal. The expression in his eyes as they followed her in her departure from the office boded no good to the innocent girl.

Marcia returned to her boarding-house elated with her success, thinking only of the kindness of her future employer. The following morning, cheerful and happy, she started for the factory. Arriving at the place, she presented the note to the foreman and was set to work operating a sewing-machine.

The room in which Marcia was placed was about

one hundred and fifty feet long, and forty feet wide. It was next to the roof and was lighted and ventilated by small narrow windows at the front and rear. The air was laden with fine dust and a sickening oily odor. There were four rows of machines extending the entire length of the hall. In this hot, illy-ventilated room or hall were crowded two hundred women and girls, upon whose faces were written in indelible characters the effect of the life they were compelled to lead. Most of the former had not only themselves but children to provide for ; of the latter, some lived at home, while the others, thrown on their own resources, were forced like Marcia to accept such work as was offered, or accept the wages of death. There were nearly one thousand women and girls employed in this factory. The wages paid averaged from one to five dollars a week.

Many of the women showed in their pallid faces, pinched, hungry expression, dull eyes, and hacking, ominous cough, that the thread of life was wearing fast. Hunger, overwork, and unhealthy quarters in the workshop, and in such homes as the wages received would permit, were doing their fatal work as unerringly as the grim destroyer could desire.

On the faces of the young girls the bloom of youth was replaced by an unhealthy pallor, occasioned by poor food and long hours of work in a close, poisonous atmosphere.

In some of the faces there was an expression that told its tale of sin and shame as clearly as the handwriting on the wall. The latter were, as a rule, better dressed than the others—some of them quite showily, indeed, for a workshop. This was so apparent as to attract Marcia's attention, unsophisticated as she was. How did they manage,

on the same pay as others received, to dress so much better? Perhaps a conversation which took place between two of the girls will explain.

"I tell you, Sue, that new girl," pointing to Marcia, "is too pretty. If I had her face and form, you wouldn't catch me here. Anything would be better than this."

"She will learn soon enough," replied the other addressed as "Sue," with a laugh. "She will get sick of working here for just enough to keep soul and body together. I am sorry for her, though."

"Oh, save your pity for yourself; you'll need it sooner than anybody else," said the other, with a bitter laugh, as she turned away; and yet, as she glanced at Marcia's sweet face, a look of pity seemed to soften her eye for a moment.

In such a place as this, Marcia received her first lessons in the process by which women are permitted to maintain a bare existence in this world of contrasts, where joy and sorrow, happiness and misery exist, one in the shadow of the other. Amid the din and clatter of the machines, the dust, the heat, and the foul odors of the closely-packed room, and the rumbling clangor of the vehicles without, Marcia was initiated into the mysteries of self-support. One-half the people on this earth are ignorant of how the other half live, nor do they care to know. There is so much bliss in ignorance that they resent any attempt to put to one side the gilded screen that conceals the dark side of life. To even suggest that it is unnecessary to tramp all around the world to find suffering heathen, when right across the street we have the poor and needy at our own doors, is denounced as communistic agitation and the incendiary argument of the worst elements of society.

Marcia, when she received her pay at the end of the week, was told by the junior partner, who was present, that it was customary to retain one week's wages, but he added in a soft tone, accompanied by a pleasant smile, "We will make an exception in your case," and as the girl colored under his look his eyes lit up with a glow of admiration. Thanking him, she proceeded homeward, thinking how kind and considerate he was.

Frank Lyster, the junior member of the firm, was noted as a well-dressed, handsome, polished gentleman in society, and a rare and genial comrade, but withal a sharp, shrewd man of the world. He was a bachelor, and did not seem to be in a hurry to join the noble order of Benedicts, although it was rumored that several society belles were quite anxious to become Mrs. Lyster. There was an under-current in his character that was not generally known to his society friends or immediate acquaintances, but too well known, alas, to more than one poor girl that had been employed in his establishment. Taking advantage of his position as an employer, and the necessities and temptations of his poorly-paid employés, he frequently brought to bear all the means his position and their necessitous condition afforded, to effect his purpose; and she was thrice armed, indeed, who successfully coped with this handsome human beast.

Marcia was singled out by him the first time he saw her. He quickly discerned that she regarded him as an ideal employer, and he lost no opportunity of still further impressing that idea upon her mind.

The first week's wages received convinced Marcia that she must secure a cheap room and board herself. This idea she acted upon at once. She found a room, which she secured for two dollars a week.

This left her two dollars per week upon which to live, buy clothes and other necessities. The balance of her savings she used to purchase some second-hand furniture, and at the beginning of the second week she was mistress of her own domicile, humble though it was. For the benefit of those who may doubt the ability of a strong, healthy person to live luxuriously on two dollars per week, a list of what she was able to purchase with her weekly stipend is furnished.

A quarter of a pound of tea, a half pound of sugar, one pound of oat meal, one pint of beans, six loaves of bread, a dozen potatoes, one soup bone, a pound of butter, a few cents' worth of salt and pepper, and sometimes a little milk. The means to purchase clothing must be secured by clipping off the corners of this bill of fare.

One month passed by, and Lyster still maintained his pleasant, watchful attention. One Saturday night he asked Marcia where she lived. She told him.

"It is too far for you to walk," he said, "and besides, it is not a fit place. I will try and secure you a room nearer the shop, and as you have been working too hard, I shall give you an easier but more responsible place, and increase your pay. Monday you will take charge of the inspection of the work in the shirt department. And, by the way, as you may need some things that your wages will not permit you to purchase, I will advance you two months' pay."

Was there ever such a good man? Marcia thought not. That night she indulged in shopping, a pursuit that among all the civilized races of the earth must ever maintain its fascinating power over the female mind. As a result of her purchases she was soon habited in attire that effected a veri-

table transformation. Her cheap dress could not hide her budding beauty, but the plain, though neat fitting one with which she replaced it revealed this beauty in all its glorious promise. Innocent and guileless as she was, she saw that she was handsome; but, beyond the natural desire to be presentable, she did not realize the value or the danger of her youthful charms.

On the following Monday night, Lyster sent for Marcia, and told her to get ready and he would take her around to the place he had engaged for her. It was on a quiet back-street, in a respectable neighborhood, for he did not advertise his private affairs by being public in their prosecution. The house was in keeping with the character of the neighborhood, and the room was more luxurious in its appointments than anything Marcia had ever seen.

“Do you like the place?” he asked,

“Oh! indeed I do, Mr. Lyster, and how can I ever repay you for all of your kindness?” said Marcia.

“No pay is required beyond making this your home if you like it. By the way, you can afford now to board, and can secure your meals at a house on this street, not far from here, which will make it convenient for you and give you more leisure,” said Lyster, as he bade her good-night, and left her in her new quarters too well pleased to ever think, in her ignorance, that it was a cage prepared with evil aforethought.

Frank Lyster had made the study of the female mind a specialty. He believed that to understand thoroughly the various phases of one woman's character, was to graduate in the school whose object is the analysis of woman's psychical nature. He was never lavish in the expenditure of money

in this direction. In fact he was mean and small, for he reasoned that a love which is inspired by presents must be fed upon them if it lives, and that it withers and dies the moment its food is withheld. But in all the little acts of kindness and courtesy which appeal so strongly to all women, he was a thorough master. When Marcia came into the office he invariably rose to his feet and remained standing until she left. He sent her frequently small bunches of wild flowers which he purchased for a few cents at the market. In her presence he always removed his hat, and in every possible way, by soft, kind words and thoughtful little attentions, impressed her with the belief that he not only admired but respected and loved her. Under such circumstances, with such an environment, it was not strange that Marcia grew to love this man. And she did love him with all the tender softness of an innocent, beautiful soul, with all the earnest force of an intense and passionate nature. Over the conquest of this virgin heart, Frank Lyster gloated in secret triumph. If he knew, he did not care to remember that this prize was as bright a jewel, as rich and rare a treasure, as heavenly a gift as God ever bestowed upon man. After she had been in her new quarters about ten days, Lyster invited her to take a ride. Flattered by the offer and anticipating the pleasure it would bring, she accepted.

She was ready when he called for her that evening. The drive was taken, a stop was made at a place of resort in the suburbs of the city; wine was ordered, and Marcia returned to her room that night, and was seen no more at Lyster's establishment.

CHAPTER XIV.

ON THE TRAIL.

After he had been working about a week, Richard was surprised on reaching home one evening to find a new boarder, a young lad whom he had known in Silverville. He was in the sitting-room when Richard entered, and recognizing him instantly, advanced with outstretched hand and smiling face. Richard looked, then grasped his hand——

“Lionel Trueson !”

“Richard Arbyght !”

Burst simultaneously from their lips.

“Why, Lionel, my boy,” said Richard, “how came you here?”

“Why, you see, the old home somehow became too small for the whole of us, and I thought I would leave and give the rest of the boys more room ; and here I am.”

“But how long have you been in Chicago, and when did you leave home, and what are you doing?”

“Which of these questions shall I answer first?” asked Lionel, laughingly.

“Answer them consecutively, if you please,” replied Richard, with mock gravity.

“Well,” said Lionel, “I have been here about three months. I left home about four months ago. I am working as a porter in a wholesale store on La Salle street ; there !”

“You left home four months ago?”

“Yes.”

“Has anything of importance taken place in Silverville since I left there?”

"Nothing; the old village is as quiet as ever."

"The folks are all well, I suppose!"

"Yes, they are all well; but have you seen since you have been here a man named William Hunter? He once lived in Silverville."

"No; but why do you ask?"

"Well, you see," said Lionel, "this man Hunter left Silverville some twenty-odd years ago for California. About two months before I left, he returned to Silverville, and one day, hearing of the murder of your father, he said he had a pretty good idea who it was that killed him."

"Well?" said Richard, quickly; and not without a touch of fierceness in his tone.

"You see," continued the boy, "when Hunter was questioned further and more closely he evaded a straightforward answer, and said he did not like to implicate or compromise any one on circumstantial evidence. He also said that the man whom he supposed guilty of the act had relatives in the vicinity of Silverville, and as they were honorable, upright people, he did not wish to say anything that would injure them in the estimation of their neighbors."

"But where is this man?" asked Richard, with savage earnestness.

"I suppose he is in California," replied Lionel. "The reason I asked if you had seen him," he continued, "was because Hunter said that he was going to visit Chicago before returning home, and I thought it might be possible that you had met him."

"Would to God I had," said Richard, fervently, "but, alas, I was not here at the time——." These words were spoken slowly and sadly, and ere their sound had passed into silence, Richard lapsed into moody meditation.

In a few moments he came back to the hard, real present, and spoke as if his mind was engaged in an effort to recover some vanishing, unspoken thought.

“Hope, dissolving hope! Fate, inexorable fate, I am thy victim! Hope, anodyne of life, the panacea of man’s misfortunes, thy shadow alone remains to mock and haunt me!”

“You must excuse me, Lionel,” he added as he noticed the boy staring at him in surprise, “for you see,” he continued, “ever since I have been able to reason, I have lived, as it were, in an atmosphere entirely my own. I have ever felt the weird influence of an unseen presence; the air I breathe seems impregnated with an essence that has entered into my very soul, and by its potent power—a power I feel but cannot describe—filled it, blended with it, and made it subject to its intangible influence. I believe—feel—that the spirit of my murdered father is ever with me. A voice seems to speak to me unceasingly, it resounds through my brain, vibrates in my heart, pulsates in my veins; and though inaudible to the external senses seems to ever repeat the one inexorable word, ‘justice.’” Overcome by his feelings, the strong man sank into a chair and wept like a child, which so affected Lionel that he, too, began to weep.

Richard, recovering himself, said:

“Come, come, Lionel, my boy, you must not weep for me. It is all over now. You called up thoughts and memories which overpowered me for the moment, but we will not refer to them again. You had better leave me to myself for a short time—but stop a moment; do you know this man’s address in California?”

“No; but I can obtain it by writing home,” answered Lionel.

"I wish you would, for I should like very much to have it."

"Why, of course I will, and won't waste any time, either. I will write to-night," said Lionel, as he left the room.

Left to himself, Richard paced the floor in silence. He endeavored to bring his mind to bear on the future of his fellow-toilers, but failed; his thoughts, despite his efforts, would not settle upon anything. He picked up the evening paper and tried to read, but, after going through a whole column, he was unable to recall a single sentence, or tell to what it referred. His mind was so dominated and filled by one all-absorbing thought, that for the time being all else seemed to be a dissolving, shadowy chaos. The whole force of his being was concentrated in one idea; he heard nothing, saw nothing, and was conscious of nothing but his own wrongs. He threw the paper aside, picked up a book, a copy of Shakespeare. He opened it mechanically, and these words of Macbeth attracted his attention:

"Cure her of that.

Canst thou not minister to a mind diseased?
Pluck from the memory a rooted sorrow?
Raze out the written troubles of the brain?"

"No, man of science, of crucibles and retorts, you can not. Your diagnosis, your curative power, your theories, are valueless here," he mused, as he dropped the book and began pacing the floor. Picking up the paper again in a calmer mood and with a clearer brain, he sought the local columns, when, as if by chance, his eye fell upon the following item, then fastened upon it with an immovable stare:

"We are glad to notice that fortune's sun has again smiled

upon our old and esteemed friend, Mr. Terwillager. For some time past he has been under a cloud—in fact, bankrupt; but a few days ago a speculation in which he was largely interested, the collapse of which ruined him, became suddenly inflated. His stocks shot up with a mercurial bound, and Mr. Terwillager, yesterday an insolvent, is to-day the happy possessor of a cool one hundred thousand dollars. We understand he is going West, and will begin business anew in that broad, undeveloped field. May he be as eminently successful as his sterling worth deserves.”

Richard read and re-read this item. He was deeply interested. Might not this be the man who paid him such a sudden and unexpected call, and who so mysteriously disappeared? After pondering the matter for a long time, Richard finally concluded that he must be the man. He slept but little that night. The next day he sought the editor of the paper, and found him in his sanctum in the third story of a massive building, surrounded by all the agencies in the way of papers, books, pens, scissors, paste-pot, and manuscript that aid in making the library of the people—the newspaper. The editor was seated at a writing-desk, in his right hand an ink-painted pen, which he ever and anon dipped into a copious ink-well, and spattered the papers around him as he carried it to the page on which he was tracing lines that none but the initiated could decipher. There he sat like another Marius in the ruins of a literary Carthage. His left hand held in a fierce and tenacious grip a handful of hair on that part of the head in which phrenologists locate the reflective faculty. Approaching him, Richard stated his business in as few words as possible.

The editorial magnate, with his eyes fixed on the page before him, moved not, spoke not. Richard again stated the object of his call. The pen went into the ink-well, spattered a portion of its contents over the papers, and propelled by its

operator, pursued its devious course over the sheet, but still no reply. Richard turned to depart, when his ear was greeted with the word "local," uttered in a short, sententious tone. One of the associate editors came to the rescue at this juncture, and told him to go up to the next floor and see the city editor.

The city editor was found.

"Do you know this man?" asked Richard, producing the paper and pointing to the above-quoted paragraph.

"I can't say that I do," yawned the local.

"Could you tell me if his name is Jack, or rather John?"

"Not being acquainted with the gentleman, how could I?" was the reply, in an annoyed voice.

"Who furnished you with the item?" said Richard.

"A friend of his."

"Where could I find this friend?"

Jumping to his feet and looking Richard over, the city editor said:

"Who are you anyhow, and what in thunder do you want?"

Richard satisfied him on the score of identity, and told him he had reason to believe that Terwillager was an old friend of his father, and he wished to see him on that account.

Satisfied with the explanation, the city editor informed him where he could secure all the information he desired. He spent the balance of the day investigating, and at night he summed up as follows:

Fifteen or twenty years prior to that time a man named John Terwillager arrived in Chicago, engaged in mercantile business, and flourished as

men seldom do. His wonderful success, however, made him bold and reckless; he dabbled in stocks of all kinds, and a crash followed, from which he emerged a ruined man. As has been stated, one of his ventures took a favorable turn, and enabled him to secure a remnant of a once colossal fortune. With this he left the city to begin life again in the far West; but where he went, no one knew. Baffled again, with no hope of ever seeing the end, Richard gave up the search in despair. Without money or time, what could he do? Nothing. And he was reluctantly forced to admit it.

CHAPTER XV.

THE PLOTTER AT WORK.

Although Richard and his associates had taken every precaution to hide their movements from Relvason and the other employers, yet one of the notices fell into the hands of one of them on the North Side. This man, too cowardly to act himself, handed the notice to Relvason, and, with a significant nod, said he thought there was trouble brewing.

Relvason, after reading it carefully, said he thought so too, but added, after a slight pause—

“I’ll explode their little scheme,” and he grinned and chuckled as if the opportunity to do so pleased him.

When Alvan Relvason grinned, the characteristics of the man were revealed in all their force.

His shaggy eyebrows came down over his eyes, which shot through their shadow a baleful gleam; his mouth opened just enough to disclose two rows of wolfish-looking teeth, and the effect produced on the beholder was not a pleasant one.

After the North Side employer had departed Relvason called his head clerk and, placing his hand on his shoulder in a familiar manner, said:

"Disguise yourself and attend that meeting to-night."

"I will, sir," said Spindle, giving his employer a look that said as plainly as words, "I need no instructions; I know what you want."

But Alvan Relvason discovered later that not only was right against him, but that the finger of wisdom and prudence guided and directed the movement.

Spindle failed in the attempt to enter the hall. No man was allowed inside who was not personally known to three disguised door-keepers. Relvason was foiled; a union was organized, and more than half of the men in his shop were enrolled, and not only enrolled, but sworn.

The following morning Spindle reported to his employer, and was greeted with a storm of rage that made the insignificant creature tremble with fear.

"So, they barred you out? The rascals! Oh, I'll teach them, the communistic conspirators! What are we coming to? These fellows will have the audacity to send a committee to me next to explain their grievances!" said Relvason, with a hissing, sneering emphasis.

"Yes, they'll want weekly cash payments," squeaked Spindle.

"Want what!" shrieked Relvason, as he seized Spindle with a vice-like grip and jerked him from his stool.

“I mean to say——”

“Well, what do you mean to say?” said Relvason, as he loosened his grip.

“What I mean,” said Spindle, as he rubbed his arm affectionately, and tried to hide the effects of the grip under a simpering grin, “is, that unless these fellows are crushed and their combination broken they will become insolent and audacious, and insist upon being treated as equals. They will make all sorts of visionary and impracticable demands. Why, they will even go so far as to demand cash for their labor in weekly payments, and the right to trade where they please. They will refuse to work more than ten hours a day, so that they may have more time for recreation and mental improvement.”

“Spindle, where did you obtain all this knowledge?” asked Relvason.

“Oh, I have seen and read their constitution.”

“Their constitution? The devil! I thought they met last night for the first time; how can they have a constitution to-day?”

“So they did, sir; so they did,” replied Spindle, “but the movement does not begin here. It began some time ago in the East, and is rapidly spreading all over the country. Nor is it confined to any particular trade. There appears to be a general movement of this character among workingmen.”

“Why, this is really serious,” and Relvason became reflective. He stood meditating for a short time, then suddenly seizing a pen and sheet of paper he hurriedly wrote the following:

“We, whose names are hereto attached, do most solemnly affirm that we do not belong to any labor union; that by this act we have, now and forever, renounced all allegiance to any and all such per-

icious combinations, and that while in our present employment we will not join any such organization."

Giving the note to Spindle, he said :

"Copy that and take it into the shop, and discharge every man who refuses to sign it. Discharge them at once. At once, I say ! This outrageous movement must be stamped out immediately. There is no time to lose. I'll go and see the other employers."

"Isn't it best to 'go slow' for a while?" suggested Spindle. "We have a large amount of work to deliver this week and next, or lose a twenty thousand dollar contract."

"True," replied Relvason ; "but take the paper in now and see how it will work."

In obedience to the order, Spindle went into the shop and presented the document first to a man who he felt confident would sign it. He was surprised and chagrined by an emphatic refusal.

"Sign, or leave the shop," said Spindle.

"Is that the only alternative?" asked the man, speaking slowly.

"There is no other," was the reply.

"Be it so, then. I would rather see my hand wither than stultify my manhood by signing such a paper. Much as I love my wife and children I will not purchase even comfort for them at such an ignoble and infamous sacrifice," said Henry Trustgood, as he took down his coat and proceeded to don the seedy, threadbare garment.

Spindle proceeded to the next ; he also refused, and was discharged, and so was the next, and the next.

Spindle changed his tactics and tried the other end of the shop, but succeeded no better. Even those who had not joined the union, stimulated by

the manly conduct of those who had, refused to sign the document.

Seized with a new idea, he went to Arbyght and said: "Mr. Relvason will make you superintendent of all his works, if you will sign this paper."

He held the paper out, but Richard did not touch or even look at it, but he looked at Spindle, and the latter took his departure quite hurriedly.

Thirty men discharged and no signers! Spindle began to grow nervous. He called the foreman and whispered to him. The foreman left the shop and Spindle continued to discharge the men.

Suddenly Relvason put in an appearance, and so adroitly did he manage it that the men supposed he had just arrived at the works. Seeing a group of men, talking earnestly and anxiously in the center of the shop, he advanced and asked, in an astonished tone, and with an innocent look, why they were not at work. The men said they had been discharged. He called Spindle, and the latter came forward with a very sheepish and troubled face. Relvason snatched the paper out of his hand and, after scanning it slowly, said, in an excited manner:

"Spindle, who told you to do this?"

The chief clerk was staggered and dazed; he had not calculated upon such a bold move.

Relvason eyed him fiercely. He was used to being eyed fiercely, and in the present instance it had the effect of bringing him to his senses, and he stammered:

"I thought you wanted it done, sir."

Relvason tore the paper to pieces, and told the men to return to their work, and Spindle sneaked out of the shop. The men resumed their tasks again, and so the matter ended—that is, in the

shop. In the office there was another scene, which will be omitted, save these words by Relvason :

“ We have been baffled twice ; it is useless to try to fight these men from our standpoint. There is a power here never developed before. We must use stratagem ; we must find out where they stand ; we have been striking in the dark.”

When a man seeks to perform an act which he fears to have weighed in the scales of public opinion, he chooses the obscurity of night. Shrouded by the mantle of darkness, when honest men sleep, he does that which he dare not think aloud in the light of day. Murderers, thieves, conspirators, tyrants—all abnormal humanity, concoct their plans and prosecute their nefarious and blighting work when nature lies in dreamy repose.

Alvan Relvason was a tyrant. The men whom he wished to degrade and enslave were up in arms in defense of a heritage given by God and jeopardized by man. Twice the employer had been defeated, because the men had acted with discretion and independence. If he only knew who the leaders were, the edifice might be destroyed. The temple would fall if the pillars were gone. To obtain this information was the one thing to do now. The design was a bold, dark one, requiring as its fit accompaniment the somber shadows of the night.

Nine o'clock that evening Relvason's carriage stopped before a low, dark, wretched, mean-looking hovel in the southern part of the Eighth ward, quite close to the West Branch of the South Fork of the Chicago river. The hovel and its surroundings reminded one of nothing save the skeleton of poverty and the corpse of misery. The air was so densely laden with an intolerable, sickening stench that nothing but man could live in the vicinity.

The street was a vile and continuous mud hole from one end to the other. The house and walks were on stilts. The river crawled and oozed sluggishly toward the lake. If there was water between its banks, it had long since lost all resemblance to that crystal fluid. It was the most villainous compound of oily, miasmatic green and thick, fetid, greasy black that ever floated a vessel.

The interior of the hovel was in keeping with the exterior and the locality. It was divided into two rooms. The front room, about fourteen feet square, served as kitchen, dining-room, and pantry. The other room, about half as large, was used for a sleeping apartment, and contained three beds, one a trundle bed, which was hauled into the kitchen at night. The floor of the main room was bare and worn through in many places. The walls were covered with grease and accumulations of soot. The furniture consisted of a cracked and burnt cooking-stove, mounted on extempore columns of stone and brick; an old-fashioned clock, minus the minute hand, its face chipped and the glass broken; a square, veneered looking-glass frame, with a triangular piece of mirror stuck in the lower right-hand corner; a few cheap chairs without backs, most of them with only three legs; a pine table, hacked and notched; an old cupboard containing a few broken dishes, a few handleless knives and forks, and a broken glass lamp, with but half a chimney, that sputtered and smoked as it threw out a dull light. This completes the description, except that the windows were shaded by old newspapers browned by smoke.

Into this pit of poverty Relvason entered, creating by his unexpected appearance no little confusion among the inmates. Three or four half-naked children ran into the back room, and left

Harvey Mellen, the lord of the domicile, and his pale, emaciated wife alone with the visitor. Mellen was coatless. The color of his shirt, which was open at the throat, had passed beyond identification. He was a middle-aged man, with a rather blank and expressionless face. He appeared to be too much of a fool to be a villain, but was, nevertheless, more villain than fool. He was one of those specimens of humanity who go through life on all fours, a crawling reptile, who would sell his soul for a gill of rum. Some years prior to this time he had worked for Relvason; but, being an inferior workman and very irregular in his habits, he was discharged. A short time after, Relvason's men struck against the order system, and would have gained their point but for the treachery of Mellen and a few like him, who took the places of the strikers. The men were beaten, but Mellen and his colleagues were discharged. They were purchased for a consideration, and when their master was through with them he flung them aside until he desired to use them again. An hour after Relvason entered Mellen's hovel he left it grinning and chuckling with apparent satisfaction.

CHAPTER XVI.

A TIMELY APPEARANCE.

The evening of the day that Relvason had so signally failed in forcing the men in his shop to sign away their manhood, Arbyght went home in a happy frame of mind. The satisfactory termination of the affair made him hopeful, and he

moved with a more sprightly and elastic step. But this mood suddenly changed, for as he walked along in the gathering gloom, faintly dispelled by the dim gaslight, there arose within him a strange and unaccountable feeling. His soul was filled, possessed by the conviction that near him stood or floated the essence of a being not in the flesh. He neither heard nor saw anything phenomenal, but from head to foot he felt filled with a subtle sensation that almost caused his hair to stand on end and his body to lose its firmness. His physical senses seemed to leave him, and in a great void, where nothing material existed, he apparently floated in a sort of mild unconsciousness. How long he remained in this state he could not tell, but when the invisible presence left him and his bodily senses returned, he discovered that he was fully a mile out of his way. He immediately retraced his steps, but had not proceeded more than a block when he noticed a young girl with clasped hands, looking earnestly, longingly upward, as if in supplication. He continued to approach, wondering much, when he noticed a woman move up, like a cat on a bird, and enter into conversation with the girl. His mind was now thoroughly aroused; a moment afterward he passed them, stopped, stepped into the shade of a large tree, overheard the conversation, and when they moved away he followed them, feeling convinced that there was some guiding thought in the strange waking-dream that had led him thither.

Grace, when found or overtaken by the woman already mentioned, was in the vicinity of Union Park. After they had proceeded a short distance in silence, the woman began to talk glibly and volubly, her great desire being the restoration of tranquillity and peace to the troubled mind of the

sobbing girl at her side. But vice ever betrays itself when simulating virtue, by attempting to appear purer and holier than virtue itself. When the heart is heavy with woe or festering with hate, an enforced smile may deceive, but it is more likely to betray the real emotion of the mind by its very ghastliness.

It is extremely doubtful whether it is within the scope of human acquirements to so successfully habit evil in the livery of virtue, as to deceive those who are disposed to exercise that moral sense that God has implanted in the soul. It is almost impossible to deceive, in this respect, persons of an excessively sensitive and spiritual nature; and Grace being of the latter class was irritated and repelled rather than soothed by the forced cheerfulness of her companion; and the more freely and gaily she chatted, the more distrustful and suspicious Grace became. Her fears gradually increased as she grew more and more conscious of a lack of candor and truth in her would-be benefactress.

The woman said she lived only a short distance from where she first overtook her. This Grace remembered, notwithstanding her fears and emotion; but when this short distance had reeled itself out over a mile, and still the end was apparently no nearer, the poor girl felt convinced that she was in a snare, and determined to elude her voluntary protector at the first favorable opportunity. They had already passed into the south division of the city, crossed the river on Randolph-street bridge, went through Franklin street, entered Wells, and passed south across Washington, Madison, Monroe, and Adams streets. They finally left Wells street and proceeded west a short distance, when the woman stopped suddenly, and taking Grace rudely by the arm said :

“Miss, this is the place, enter quickly ;” while at the same time she flung the gate of a high board fence open with the other hand, and endeavored to push the frightened girl through the narrow passage.

Richard followed Grace and the woman for nearly fifteen minutes, revolving in his mind how he would proceed ; but he was unable to come to any conclusion. Just then he saw a police officer on the opposite side of the street ; he crossed over and accosted him. The officer was a small, lithe man, rather oldish, with sharp piercing eyes, before whose intense look Richard involuntarily quailed. After hearing his story, Sergeant Soolfire crossed the street rapidly, and bidding Richard follow the parties, dove down a side street and disappeared, leaving him not only puzzled but provoked at his incomprehensible conduct.

In a few minutes the Sergeant reappeared, coming up the street from the opposite direction.

“You are right,” he said, as soon as he met Arbygth.

“You know the woman ?” said Richard.

“Well, I should say I did. It is Madam B —, one of the most notorious women in Chicago ; we will follow her and block her infernal game.”

The house before which the woman stopped was a somber-looking, three-story brick structure, with high arched windows. The blinds were closed tightly, and there was no light visible on the first floor. Through the latticed blinds of the second and third-floor windows faint glimmering rays of light were feebly streaming. On the right-hand side of the building three massive stone steps led to a small portico, closed on the sides. The outer or portico door was open, the upper half of the inner door was paneled with a plate of ground-

red glass, through which the solitary gas-jet in the hall shone like the great eye of some terrible demon.

Grace shuddered at the sight of the building, its somber aspect, and the grave-like stillness that hung like a ghostly pall over the place, but above all at the ominous red glare of the light in the hall. She had already made up her mind to escape, but no opportunity had yet presented itself; but when she found herself at the gate, intuitively realizing her danger, she refused pointedly and stubbornly to enter. The woman, while studying what persuasive argument she could use, for she was cognizant of being followed for the last twenty minutes by two men, and realizing that she must act speedily and prevent any outcry, was taken by surprise from an unexpected quarter.

At this moment an inmate emerged from the building through a side door. She was a woman of magnificent physical development, as symmetrical in form, as beautiful in feature as the daughter of Hera. She was modestly, even plainly attired, and betrayed neither by look nor act the class to which she unfortunately belonged. Coming toward the gate, she saw the shrinking, frightened Grace, and rushing toward her, she cried out:

“Back child, go back; as you value your life do not enter here. Death is ——”

What further she might have said was suddenly checked by the appearance of two brutal, libidinous-looking male wretches, who seized the modern Hebe by the arms, and rudely dragged her back toward the house, muttering the while vile and horrid imprecations; but ere they were aware, she broke from their grasp and by a quick, powerful blow in the face, felled one of the rascals to the earth.

Grace, in the mean time, was fully aroused and aware of her danger, and she struggled bravely to free herself from the clutch of a monster more hideous and dreadful than the cobra or tiger, because, being human, more cunning and fiendish.

The woman had her hand over Grace's mouth, to prevent an outcry, and was thus at a disadvantage, and Grace would have escaped by her own efforts, but for the appearance of the two men from the house ; frightened by their rushing toward her, she swooned away.

Before the men could recover from the attack or Madame B—— take advantage of Grace's condition, Soolfire and Richard were upon them. The men rushed back into the house ; the madam had also disappeared as if by magic, and the insensible form of the homeless girl was left alone with her rescuers. Some distance back the officer had taken the precaution to hail a passing carriage, and requested the driver to follow them and keep within sight.

Into this carriage the apparently lifeless Grace was tenderly placed. A short consultation was held, directions were given to the driver, and the carriage dashed away. In about five minutes it stopped before a neat, cheerful, and comfortable-looking cottage, into which the still inanimate girl was carried.

The house into which Grace was taken was the happy home of Sergeant Soolfire. The room into which she was brought, though small, was very cosy and comfortable, and was rendered doubly so by the cheerful glow of a grate fire. Grace was placed on a lounge, and Mrs. Soolfire, a gentle-looking woman, who comprehended the situation, set to work to restore her to consciousness ; but her restoratives and salts were not needed, for just

then she slowly opened her eyes, raised herself on her elbow, sat up, and looked around the room with a puzzled stare, which was succeeded for a moment by a look of such terrible fright, so inexpressibly beseeching, that Mrs. Soolfire was moved to tears.

"Don't be alarmed, child," said the kind-hearted woman, "you are among friends. Let me take your hat and shawl; you must make yourself at home, my dear; we'll all be kind and good to you, so cheer up, won't you, now?" and she took Grace gently by the hand.

Soothed and calmed by the kind, sweet tones of the motherly voice, but more by the tears in Mrs. Soolfire's eyes, the sorely tried maiden wept as if her heart would break.

Mrs. Soolfire wisely let her weep, knowing that it was the best known remedy for her overwrought nerves.

"Where am I?" asked Grace, timidly, and in a half sobbing voice.

"You are in the hands of those who will be good, kind friends to you. My husband is Sergeant Soolfire, of the police. He and this young man rescued you from a bad woman. It was very lucky, my dear, but it is all over, and you must not think of it again."

"She can thank Mr. Arbyght here," said the Sergeant, speaking for the first time.

She raised her eyes, dim with tears, and gave Richard a look that repaid him a hundred fold. Her heart and soul went out in that look.

"Oh, it is of no consequence—that is, to me," said Richard, somewhat embarrassed, "the pleasure of rendering the service fully repays me."

Richard was nervous and agitated when he entered the room, but when the lovely girl turned to

him with her sad, sweet face, he was considerably moved and left the house soon afterward.

Mrs. Soolfire was so genial and warm-hearted that Grace was soon at her ease, and after partaking of some light refreshment, she suffered herself to be put to bed like a child. Mrs. Soolfire tucked the clothes around her so motherly, and kissed her so tenderly, that she burst into tears again, and kissed her warmly in return.

“You are so kind and good——”

“There, there ; go to sleep now, dear.”

“And I never knew what it was to have a mother,” added Grace, with short, quick sobs.

“My dear child, don’t think of it now ; trust in God and all will be well,” and kissing her again, Mrs. Soolfire left her ; and gentle sleep soon came and stole from her, for the present, all trace of trouble and sorrow.

On his way home, Richard soliloquized : “I have seen that face somewhere ; and that voice, how it vibrated and thrilled through every fiber of my body. Strange ! Stranger still that I should lapse into a dreamy, unconscious reverie and go so far out of my way, just for all the world as if that girl’s guardian angel had forcibly carried me thither. What a strange sensation came over me in that carriage. As soon as her head rested on my shoulder I experienced a feeling so indescribable that it alarmed me. I am positive I have seen that face ; but where ? I’m blest if I don’t think I am going crazy. Pshaw ! It’s all imagination ; I never saw that face or heard that voice. Yes, I have seen it, I know I have.”

Reaching home put an end to Richard’s musings. That night he found it almost impossible to sleep. Turn which way he would, the sweet, sad face of the girl he had rescued rose before him. She en-

tered his mind, despotically drove out every other thought and reigned there in undisputed sway. Sleep came at last, but it did not banish that face from the sleeper's mind.

While he slept, he dreamed that his father entered his room, came to his bedside, regarded him sadly, yet sternly, and in a voice that sounded immeasurably far off, said: "My son, where is your sister?" He tried to speak but could not. His father pointed his right hand upward. Following the direction of the hand, Richard saw in the air a row of transparent letters. He could see through the letters, yet they were plainly visible, and represented this sentence: "Be to her a brother, a father, a mother." He remembered at once that these were the last words of his dying mother. His heart smote him, and he was about to cry out in agony when the door opened and his mother came in softly. His father's stern look became tender immediately, the terrible letters vanished, and his father disappeared. His mother came toward him with the same loving smile she ever had for her darling boy. Again he essayed to speak, but found it impossible. His mother touched him on the arm and bade him follow her, which he did. She led him through several streets and finally paused before a small house, toward which she earnestly pointed. Richard looked toward the house, recognized it, and in astonishment looked at his mother, or where she seemed to be, but nothing but the blue vault of heaven met his gaze. Filled with amazement, he awoke. It was broad daylight.

CHAPTER XVII.

A WOMAN'S WRONG.

A few moments after the carriage containing Richard, the Sergeant, and Grace had rolled away, the woman who had warned Grace might have been seen standing on the sidewalk almost opposite the mansion of Madam B——. Her face was colorless, the bloodless lips firmly set, and from her eyes shone an unnatural luster. She cast quick, furtive glances around her, then gazed mockingly at the house she was wont to call "home."

"Go back?" she whispered as if asking herself the question. A long pause, during which a look of unrelenting determination gradually overspread her ghastly face; then, turning slowly, she walked briskly up the silent street; but before she reached the end of the block she stopped suddenly, and in hollow, broken accents, scarcely audible, exclaimed:

"But where shall I go?"

The look of firm resolve had given place to one of fright and torture, as she mechanically answered her own question by repeating the lines:

"Anywhere, anywhere,
Out of the world."

Then, growing calmer, she again moved on, so tired, so weary, so sick and sore at heart that to lay down her burden and sleep to wake no more was now her only thought. As she walked wearily along this thought filled her soul with a great, peaceful calm. She wandered aimlessly through several streets, unmindful of all around her, until

she found herself standing upon a bridge leaning over the railing and peering intently into the murky, stagnant stream below. No silvery moon-beam's sheen or glistening ripple was reflected back by the dark, inky river. It was uninviting, repelling, and redolent of rank and foul odors; but the tired being who stood over it believed she could find rest under its feculent surface.

Glancing around and finding herself alone on the bridge she firmly grasped the railing, when there came from across the river through the pestilential air the silvery voice of a child crying out:

"Evening paper, all about the suicide—paper, sir?"

As these words were wafted to her ears she quickly turned toward the side whence the cry of the newsboy came.

"Evening paper—have a paper, sir?"

The boy was now upon the other end of the bridge and approaching. A soft and tender expression came into her eyes, her whole body trembled, and from her lips there issued gaspingly one word—

"Freddy!"

"All about the suicide—evening paper?"

The boy was now quite close. She darted through the brace net-work, across the roadway to the other side of the bridge, and passed rapidly to the street up which the boy had come. Her eyes were now filled with tears, and gliding into an alley that led to a parallel street she wept long and bitterly. Weeping seemed a relief; and coming out into the other street, she resolved to seek lodgings for the night and determine what further she would do on the morrow.

Across the street, almost facing the alley, was a hotel. She went in and asked for a room.

“Have you any baggage?” asked the clerk.

“No, not with me.”

“Then, you must pay in advance.”

She now remembered that she had not a cent, that Madam B—— took from her that morning all the money she had. Without saying a word she turned and walked out of the hotel. She had proceeded but a few steps when a well-dressed man overtook her, and, raising his hat, politely said :

“Miss, will you permit me to pay for your room?”

She cast one quick glance at the man, and, divining his object by the expression of his face, answered sharply—

“No!” and walked on; but there floated back to the ears of her would-be benefactor these words:

“How unselfish, how disinterested is the charity of that noble being called man.”

Again she paced the streets friendless—alone, until toward midnight, thoroughly worn out and exhausted she knocked at the door of her colored washerwoman, with whom she found shelter for the night. The next morning the washerwoman borrowed a daily paper from a barber, whose shop was near by. She read its columns carefully, and, having noted the addresses of those who advertised for servants or shop-girls, started out in quest of work.

The first lady called on asked for a letter of introduction and recommendation from her last employer. To this request she returned an evasive answer and left. The same request was invariably made at every place she called. At last, driven to the verge of despair when asked the usual stereotyped question as to character, the last place she worked, and where she lived, by a lady upon whom she called, she burst into tears, and made known

in a few brief words her history. The lady was shocked, and peremptorily ordered her to leave the house. As she passed out through the hall, she met a letter-carrier at the door, and, as she went down the marble steps she heard the lady who had driven her away say to the letter-carrier in a sweet, winning voice:

"Now, remember, Henry, letters addressed to me are to be delivered to me personally. You must not deliver my letters to my husband;" and as the carrier turned from the door the lady called, confidentially, "I'll not forget you New Year's."

The next person she called upon advised her to call at a place known as the "Friendly Inn," which was maintained by an association of wealthy but charitable ladies. She did so. The secretary, after she had listened to her story, said she would obtain her admission to the "Home for Fallen Women."

"But," said this modern Magdalen, "is it necessary that my shame should be branded upon my forehead, so that the whole world will know who and what I am? Is it not possible to save me that humiliation?"

The secretary thought not, and again the wanderer went out upon the streets in search of work. Toward evening she called at the last place upon the list she had made before starting in the morning. A servant received her very kindly, and, explaining that her mistress was out, requested her to step into a room and wait until she returned. She did so, and the servant left the room, but had been gone scarcely a moment when another door opened and the master of the house entered the room. The man and the woman stood face to face.

"Marcia Nullus!"

"Frank Lyster!"

Both exclaimed, almost in the same breath.

"How dare you come here!" he fairly hissed, livid with suppressed rage.

"As heaven is my judge, I did not know that you lived here," she answered timidly.

"That's a lie," he said; "you came here to blackmail me, but no woman can play that game upon me; the sooner you learn that the better. Do you hear?" His air and manner had in it the assumed bravado of the coward.

Marcia's eyes flashed, her lips trembled, but in a cool, firm voice, she replied:

"Frank Lyster, I did not come here for money. All day long I have dragged my weary body through this city in search of employment. On that mission I came here, not knowing that you lived in this house. I have failed in my search. Why? Because I am a woman without character or reputation. Need I ask you why this is so? But now that I am here, I will ask of you, not a favor, but an act of justice. You can give me a letter stating that I worked in your factory and that I was honest and trustworthy. That will aid me in obtaining work, and work I must have, for I have firmly resolved to die rather than go back to the life you forced me to lead."

"Wait here five minutes," said Lyster, "and you shall have what you desire."

He left the room, and at the end of five or six minutes the door opened again, and there came in, not Lyster, but two police officers.

"We want you, Miss," said one of the officers; and without waiting for the astonished and horror-stricken woman to reply, seized her and forcibly dragged her from the house.

That night Marcia Nullus lay in agony of mind and anguish of soul on a bare board, in a damp,

noisome stone cell. What torture of body and mind she suffered may be imagined, it can not be described.

The following day she stood at the bar of a court of justice, charged with residing in a house of evil reputation. To this charge she pleaded guilty. It was a strange, sad scene. A beautiful woman, neatly dressed, whose features showed no evidence of dissipation, but whose eyes were swollen and red from hours of continuous weeping, pleading to such a charge, while stared at by the gaping crowd of idlers and loafers who usually congregate at such places. When asked by the court if she had anything to say why the sentence of the law should not be pronounced against her, Marcia, amid tears and sobs, in a choking voice, said :

“I was never in a place of this character before, and I hardly know what to say. I am not quite sure that I rightly comprehend the force of your question.”

She spoke in a manner so respectful and with such candor and simplicity as to awaken in the heart of the judge a sympathetic interest in the case, such as he had not before experienced ; and he put the legal formula differently.

“Miss Nullus, having pleaded to the charge upon which you were arraigned, it becomes the duty of the court to pronounce upon you the sentence of the law. But the extent of the penalty is not arbitrarily fixed by the statute. A discretionary power is vested in the court, and the penalty may be lenient or severe to a certain limit, as the facts in each case may warrant. If you have anything to say in mitigation of the sentence, the court will be pleased to hear it.”

“I believe I now understand you,” said Marcia,

“and, thanking you for your kindness, will avail myself of the merciful provisions of the law. My experience of the past few years has been of such a character as to fix in my mind the conviction that the laws made by man did not contain a single element of mercy. You see before you a fallen woman. It would be useless for me to say I am blameless, for I should not be believed; yet a woman never fell that a man did not also fall, but the man stands erect again, while the woman remains in the depths of her degradation, forever despised and unforgiven; but the man who dragged her down is not only forgiven, but permitted to use his past experience that he may more easily drag down fresh victims. I came to this city eight years ago, friendless and alone, without a living relative in the world, ‘the last leaf’ upon my family tree. I went to work in a shirt and cloak factory; my desire was to earn an honest living. I was young, and knew nothing of evil or wrong. My employer took advantage of my poverty, my innocence and ignorance of the ways of the world. I believed he was a truly noble and good man; he is so regarded to-day, while I, his victim, am a ruined, blighted woman. I have struggled and tried for years to escape from the life into which he forced me, but I had sinned against society, and society is inexorable in its determination not to forgive a woman.

“The night before last, as I was leaving the residence of Madam B——, I saw that woman luring a fresh victim into her den. I at once warned the intended victim of her danger, and left that place to return there no more. All day yesterday I diligently searched the city for work, but was everywhere repulsed because I was unknown and characterless. Toward evening, while continuing my fruitless search, I entered a house, not know-

ing who was its occupant, and found myself face to face with my destroyer. He caused my arrest. Additional disgrace, the jail, the workhouse, are his ideas of justice. When Amnon ruined Thamer, he intensified the injury and wrong by driving her away. But that was centuries ago. Man has progressed much since King David's time, for now when a man ruins a woman he not only deserts her and casts her out into the boundless void of an unfeeling, uncharitable world, but he is not content until he has driven her into the brothel, the police station, and the workhouse, so that her cry for justice may lose its force, because it will then come from a source so degraded and low that none will listen to it. This is all I have to say. I want to lead an honest life, and am determined to do so, no matter what may be the sentence you may pass upon me."

"What is the name of this mysterious man who brought all this misery upon you?" asked the city attorney, with a sneer.

"When I first knew him," answered Marcia, without noticing the tone of the question, "he was a single man. He is now married. His wife has done me no injury; why should I inflict pain upon her?"

The attorney sank back abashed, and did not press the inquiry.

"Have you any children?" said the judge.

Marcia uttered a low, moaning cry, and managed to stammer, convulsively:

"The boy has a good home on the South Side. The family have adopted him. I am not permitted to see him—but—I—I—heard his dear, sweet voice the other night. He does not know his own mother." Here she broke down completely.

There was hardly a dry eye in the court room.

Even the roughs and loafers felt uncomfortable, and began to sneak away.

Of this scene a lady and gentleman, who sat in one corner of the room, were interested spectators. A burglary had been committed at their house the evening previous, and they were there in response to the usual subpoena. The lady was a small, delicate-looking woman, whose countenance beamed with kindly sympathy and love. She was deeply affected by Marcia's story, and could scarcely refrain from weeping aloud. When Marcia had concluded, she whispered a few words to her husband, after which that gentleman arose and addressed the court :

"May it please your Honor, my wife and myself believe this poor girl's story. We think she has been much wronged and injured, and, if agreeable to your Honor, we will gladly furnish her with a home and give her an opportunity of leading a different life."

"Why, certainly, Mr. Lanspear," said the judge, "and permit me to thank you and Mrs. Lanspear for your noble charity in this matter. Miss Nullus, will you accept the offer of these good people?"

But Marcia did not hear. Overcome by her emotions, she had fainted.

An hour after, she entered upon a new life in her new home—the home of the Lanspears.

Mrs. Lanspear was a Christian woman, of whom her neighbors had naught but good to say. But when it became known that she had taken into her house, as a servant, a fallen woman, these same neighbors were greatly shocked. It furnished them food for gossip for weeks. Those who went oftenest to church, and who would resent the imputation that they were not charitable and holy in their own

lives, were the loudest in their clamor, the severest in their condemnation. Mothers who permitted their daughters to receive the attentions of wealthy young men whose evil habits were the talk of the city, felt so outraged that they refused to call upon Mrs. Lanspear. Frank Lyster moved in this circle, and was ever a most welcome guest. It frequently happens that those who, because of the evil in their own lives, most need the garment of silence and charity, are the most persistent in their search for motes in the eyes of their neighbors. It's the old song of "stop thief!" sung in a different key. Frank Lyster was assiduous and relentless in his persecutions of his victim. Her existence was a living, accusing cry against his infamy. There are small men, little men, mean, petty men, contemptible, soulless creatures in the shape of men—like those whom Shakespeare said should pass for men because God made them—but the meanest specimen of the *genus homo*, the most despicable, abhorred, and lowest type of creature that disgraces God's image, is the being in man's clothes who persecutes, slanders, and makes war upon a weak, defenseless woman who is endeavoring to make an honest living. Such a being was Frank Lyster, and it is to be regretted that this cowardly type has many representatives in the shape of canting hypocrites and pious frauds, who see in their neighbors all the evil and meanness which rankle and fester in their own hearts and souls.

CHAPTER XVIII.

RICHARD CALLS ON GRACE.

"You are late this morning?" said Mrs. Yudall, Richard's landlady, with interrogative emphasis, the moment he appeared in the dining-room.

"Yes, I am late, but I hope you will pardon my tardiness. I fear I have trespassed upon your time," replied Richard.

"Oh, no apology is necessary, Mr. Arbygth; pray don't mention it," said Mrs. Yudall, and at the same time she glanced furtively at the little bronze clock, which just then gave a click, drew back its minute-hand one space with a jerk, gave a whirring note of warning, and struck the hour with a mellow, silvery sound, while she rendered a pantomime accompaniment by barely opening and closing her lips at each stroke.

"Nine," she said, in an audible whisper, as the little monitor ceased its time-measuring chime.

"Nine? Why so it is," responded Richard, in answer to his own question, as he gazed in amazement at the dial of the clock. "Really, Mrs. Yudall, I did not think it was so late. I fear I have annoyed you by my delay."

"Have you been ill, Mr. Arbygth?" was the only response.

Richard felt that, while the question put to him was a simple one, the words implied a request that he should give some account of himself. The tone in which the words were uttered, the look that accompanied them, the shape of the mouth, the poise of the head were a consolidated interrogation. Not desiring, however, to make a confidante of his landlady, he purposely lapsed into one of his im-

penetrable reveries, and, although present in person, his mind appeared to wander off and lose itself in the dark, grayish cumulative masses of vapor and smoke that were continually rising from the city, kissing its tall spires, and drifting away into echoless space.

In fencing, however, with a woman, armed with a lingual rapier, man is generally worsted, and Richard did not prove an exception. A few well-directed thrusts broke down his guard of abstraction and forced him to submit.

"You retired early last night?"

"To my room, but not to rest," he replied.

"You read and write more than ordinary mortals?" The tone was growing still more inquisitorial.

"Reading, with me, is a passion, writing a duty. I love the first; am wedded to it; the latter is the result of the union," said Richard.

"Anything very particular just now?"

This last question convinced Richard that he had better submit gracefully, and he was about to explain, when the door-bell rang sharply.

"Good gracious! it must be a mad man," said Mrs. Yudall, in a tremor of alarm. "Do see who it is, Mr. Arbyght."

Richard complied, and found at the door Sergeant Soolfire, who said he had called to inform him that Miss Grace had expressed a desire to have him call upon her, at his convenience.

"It is my convenience now," said Richard, gallantly, and a few moments later he was on his way to the cottage, leaving Mrs. Yudall more mystified and perplexed than ever.

Grace received him kindly, and said she wished to thank him for his kindness.

"You have placed me under lasting obligations,"

she said, "for I was an entire stranger to you;" she naively and innocently added, "and for that reason I feel more deeply indebted."

"If what I did made you my debtor," said Richard, "you are now the creditor, for your kind appreciation has more than trebly repaid me. It is true I did not know you, but to the claims of innocence and virtue I trust I will never be a stranger. It is man's duty to protect the defenseless, and you will place me under many obligations by not alluding to it again."

"Do you think it would be fair to make me your debtor, and then deprive me of the pleasure of repaying you? Are you sure that you are not just a little arbitrary, Mr. Arbyght."

"I think that a man would be lacking in delicacy of feeling, and even honor, who would aid or assist an unprotected woman in any manner, for the purpose of exacting her appreciation or making her feel that he had a claim upon her gratitude," Richard replied.

"You are very kind and I feel that I may safely give you my confidence. I have already informed these noble-hearted, generous people how I—I——" her voice became plaintive, quivered and broke.

"You task your memory unnecessarily; let the experience of yesterday be blotted from your mind," said Richard in a gentle, soothing voice and then added:

"I do not wish your confidence at the cost of a single word that will recall incidents or events which may give you pain."

"I shall never forget yesterday," she resumed in a painfully sad voice. Then raising her eyes she half glanced at her companion, dropped them again and said in a sweeter and more thankful tone, "I don't want to forget it."

“There are events in all our lives, not in themselves bad or tending to compromise us in the least, but which, nevertheless, it would be better for our peace of mind not to recall. Do you not think so, Miss ——?”

“Soolfire,” said Grace, noticing his hesitation and divining the cause.

“Soolfire?” repeated Richard with a surprised look and doubtful inquiring voice.

“Yes, to-day I am Grace Soolfire, yesterday I was Grace Relvason.”

“Relvason! you astonish me!” said Richard in amazement.

“You have heard the name before? I believe you are employed by Mr. Relvason?” said Grace.

“I am,” replied Richard, “but I am perplexed to account for your knowledge of that fact.”

“It is quite easily accounted for: Mr. Relvason returned home one evening in a very perturbed state of mind; he refused supper, declined to speak, and made us all uncomfortable by his agitated, mysterious manner. The next day we learned that a man named Arbyght, with whom Mr. Relvason said he had had a warm discussion, was the cause of the trouble.”

“I am very sorry to have been the involuntary cause of so much uneasiness,” said Richard, “but I hope I am forgiven by at least one member of the family?”

“I am not certain of that,” Grace replied. “I can speak for none but myself, and I am not a member of the family. I was always so considered, but yesterday I discovered that I had no claims upon them whatever, not even to their name. Hence, I am here preferring to earn my own living rather than live in idleness and eat the bread of others. I have discarded their name and taken that of my

benefactors until such a time as God, in His justice and mercy, restores to me my own."

Again her voice quivered, and tears dimmed her eyes, but it was only for a moment. Continuing, she said: "I have lived here but five years. My childhood days, at least all I can recollect of them, were spent in Cleveland, Ohio. As far back as my memory extends I can see a dark, stern woman, though kind at times, whom I was taught to regard and call my aunt. About five years ago she died, and her brother, Mr. Relvason, who, by the terms of her will was made executor of the estate, came to Cleveland, and, after the details of the will had been carried out, as he said—I never saw nor heard it read—he brought me with him to Chicago, and introduced me to the friends of the family as his niece, and such I supposed myself to be, until his daughter, in a fit of jealous spleen informed me that I was not a member of the family, and produced a letter written by my supposed aunt, by which it appears that I am the child of some poor mechanic, of whose very name they robbed me, and who, perhaps, has long since been—dead. I know nothing of my—my—mother——" Her voice failed her completely, her eyes filled with tears, her lips quivered, but no sound escaped them. Her heart was too full for utterance.

Mrs. Soolfire came in just then, and Richard thought very opportunely, as her coming served to dispel somewhat a wordless grief he felt unable to relieve. He left soon after, promising to call the next day.

On his way home, the idea that he had at some remote period seen the face of the woman he had just left, began again to haunt his brain; but when or where, he taxed his memory in vain to determine. The outlines of the face, and, at times,

the cadence of the voice, seemed to rouse in his mind-slumbering impressions, but, like the ghosts of Ossian, they were too faint and undefined to be formed into anything real or tangible.

"I found this upon the floor of your room," said the chambermaid to Richard, immediately after his arrival home, handing him at the same time a curiously-wrought, antique-looking, solid gold locket.

"It is mine," he replied, "I was examining it some days ago and forgot to put it away," which neglect he proceeded at once to rectify, but before doing so he opened it and glanced at the portrait it contained, when, as if by magic, memory revealed an impression beyond which lay a chain of thought which he followed, link by link, to the end. Putting the locket away, he took a sheet of paper and hastily wrote a letter, saying to himself as he left the house :

"It must be so ! I feel it ! I believe it !"

CHAPTER XIX.

A TRAITOR IN CAMP.

The union had been in existence some three weeks and had held six or seven meetings. Still none but the initiated knew where its sessions were held, or who were members. No further open or covert opposition, other than that already mentioned, appeared. The word "union" seemed to be tabooed both by employers and men by tacit consent. The men felt jubilant, but the leaders of

the movement looked grave and counseled discretion, unity and secrecy. They were apprehensive that the great quiet that then prevailed was the calm that precedes a storm. They were right. The leviathan of selfishness and wrong was not asleep. Down at the bottom of a pool, thick with the slime of greedy rapacity and rank injustice, he lay watchful and waiting. But the appearance of the pool was placid, except that one day a frothy scum bubbled up to the surface and floated off to the fennyside among the brakes and rushes. By a slight stretch of the imagination it could be made to assume the form of one Harvey Mellen. At the last meeting of the union this man was proposed for membership. His admission was strenuously opposed by some, and as earnestly advocated by others. It was urged by the former that he was both morally and mechanically unfit for membership; that he was a confirmed inebriate, an immoral man, lacking in manhood, wanting in honor, in stability, and utterly unreliable. By the latter it was warmly urged that he had reformed, joined the Good Templars and the church, had become industrious, saved his earnings and appeared more respectable. In addition, his friends maintained, even if the charges preferred against him were true, it was the duty of the union to extend to him a helping-hand, and aid in making him a better man. The latter argument secured his admission.

No attempt was made to analyze Harvey Mellen's sudden reformation and ascertain what wrought in him such a change. There was no thought that instead of his conscience being the prompting power, it was Alvan Relvason's money. Had they paused to investigate, they would have discovered that religion, temperance, and respectability struck and overpowered Harvey Mellen as

suddenly as a sandstorm overwhelms the traveler in the desert.

That night, long after ten o'clock, a light still shone through the curtained windows of Relvason's office, which was located close to his principal shop, being in fact a small addition attached to one end of the shop, and communicating with it by a heavy oaken door, which closed automatically by means of a heavy weight and pulley, and locked by a spring-bolt which could be opened only on the office side. The other end of the shop faced an alley and communicated with it by a small door.

About eleven o'clock a man disguised in a soldier's overcoat, dyed black, the cape drawn up over his head and falling in irregular folds about his face, approached this door, peered cautiously around, then inserted a key in the rusty lock and turned the bolt. As it flew open with a sharp click, which sounded unnaturally loud in the silence of the night, the muffled figure drew back in a nervous, startled manner, frightened, like the Witch of Endor, at a specter of his own conjuration.

He glanced around again, then entered the shop and carefully closed the door. Cautiously groping his way, he soon reached the entrance leading to the office, and was admitted by Spindle. The heavy oaken door closed with a bang and jar that shook the office, and Harvey Mellen stood before Relvason and his Figaro.

"You have kept your promise, I see!" said Relvason, as he rubbed his hands with sardonic complacency, and his wolfish teeth glistened through his slightly-parted lips.

"It was no easy task, sir," replied Mellen, doggedly, and he looked nervous and ill at ease as he changed his Scotch cap from one hand to the other,

his eyes fixed upon the lower part of Relvason's chair, as if he was intently counting the legs and rounds in that piece of furniture.

"Indeed!" said Relvason, in a contemptuous, sneering tone, which made the slave before him cringe.

"Were you initiated?"

"Yes, sir."

"Good!" said Relvason, and his eyes glowed through their shaggy shade with grim humor, and his wolfish teeth glistened more cruelly.

"Is the association oath-bound?"

Mellen's face blanched with a sickly pallor, and he raised his head and looking at Relvason with a pitiful stare, murmured in a hoarse whisper:

"Spare me!"

"Why should I?" answered Relvason, and the words came out with a hissing whirr, "I have paid you for the information I seek and I must have it!"

"It is oath-bound, very, very much so," stammered Mellen.

"Did you take this oath?" asked Relvason.

Again Mellen raised his head and looked at Relvason imploringly, while his quivering lips, trembling body, and clasped hands, all said—spare me!

But Relvason's object was to destroy the last vestige of manhood in his tool, and effectually fit him for any plot or scheme necessary to effect his purpose.

"Did you take the oath?" asked Relvason, in a fiercer tone.

"I had to take it, sir," replied Mellen, who, seeing there was no escape, assumed a sullen, dogged bravado he was far from feeling.

"Who are the principal movers in the matter?"

“Arbyght, Trustgood, Castaway and McFlinn, and in influence they stand in the order named.”

“Arbyght, Trustgood, Castaway and McFlinn,” repeated Relvason, as if fixing the names in his memory.

“I have the names recorded,” said Spindle, speaking for the first time.

“So you think Arbyght exerts more influence in this movement than any of the rest?” said Relvason.

“I think,” replied Mellen, “that if Arbyght was withdrawn from the movement it would be so badly crippled that it would disband, but I am sure that if the four men I have named were forced to leave it, the union would be short-lived.”

“Will they undertake an offensive movement at present?”

“Not at present, as near as I can learn; the policy is to organize thoroughly before making any demands.”

The rest of the conversation related to the course to be taken at the next meeting, and when it was concluded Mellen was shown to the door by Spindle, and went out into the darkness.

The next morning Felix Rulless came to where Richard was at work in the shop and commenced a diligent scrutiny of the tools peculiar to the trade. His actions appeared slightly ludicrous, but he looked sad and ill at ease, and Richard felt sure he had some unpleasant news to communicate.

“A fine morning, Richard,” he finally said, looking at a shaving-knife as if endeavoring to make out the name of the manufacturer.

“It is, indeed, old friend;” but, detecting the tremor in the foreman’s voice, he added: “But, pray, tell me what is the trouble?”

"I am afraid you have been indiscreet," was the reply.

"Ah! I see how it is, I am wanted at the office," said Richard.

"You—hum—that is—yes, I believe you are," and Rulless, turning to go away, said in a husky voice, "I am afraid we will lose you, Richard."

Yes. It was coming. Relvason was looking over the morning mail as Richard entered, and to our hero's mind the manner in which he tore open the envelopes suggested a cruel nature; the manner in which he drew out the letter and flung the envelope aside suggested a hot, imperious nature; and the manner in which he threw certain portions of the mail to Spindle suggested a haughty, tyrannical nature. Richard felt sure that he read aright these traits of character in these most trivial acts of the man. He did read aright. Every act and movement of our lives is but a character language that reveals the hidden soul as it really is.

"Mr. Relvason, I understand you wish to see me," said Richard.

"So I did, so I did; be seated, sir," speaking as if it were of no consequence. "I had almost forgotten it," he continued as he came from behind the office railing and handed Richard a chair, which the latter courteously declined, well knowing that by so doing he would hasten the business in hand.

"I wish to speak to you about this foolish union business," said Relvason, "and in doing so my only aim is to prevent unpleasant complications and save us all much unnecessary trouble."

"I am glad to hear that your aim is a pacific one," replied Richard.

"Pacifc! so it is, but what do you think is the best method of establishing a lasting peace between

two contending forces?" asked Relvason with a touch of asperity in his tone.

"To have both parties fully and honestly conform to the principles of justice, each seeking and demanding only what rightfully belongs to itself, and restoring to the other anything unjustly acquired," responded Richard, promptly and earnestly.

"That is your idea of the proper way to secure a lasting peace?"

"It is," replied Richard.

"It is not mine," said Relvason with a sneer. "My method of effecting a lasting peace between two contending forces," he added, "would be to wholly subordinate one to the power of the other."

"In other words, you would destroy one of the forces?"

"Precisely."

"But if the two forces are so united that the destruction of one involves the annihilation of the other?"

"We will not argue the question further, Mr. Arbygth; I dare say you understand me?"

"I believe I do, Mr. Relvason."

"Well then let us come to the point at once. I am informed that my men, yourself included, have organized a labor union."

"That is true," said Richard, coolly.

"I will not submit to it!" fairly roared Relvason.

"And why not? It is admitted by all candid men who have given this question careful consideration, that working men are benefited socially, morally, and intellectually by these organizations."

"I don't believe it, but even if it were true it has nothing to do with the present controversy. I

have a right to employ whom I please and I will not have union men in my shops."

"If these are your views there is no room for further argument," replied Richard.

"These are my views and I mean to enforce them; but I sent for you because I desired to submit to you a proposition. You seem to be a sensible man, and must know that these unions never accomplish any good. Since the dawn of history there have been classes in society, and while the world lasts there will be rich men and poor men. This is an inevitable law of human nature, and labor unions only tend to make the poor dissatisfied. They can in no event hope to cope with organized capital; they can in fact only result in misery and suffering to those who belong to them. You must admit this, and I ask you as an honest man to advise the men to withdraw from this combination at once. I want peace; if I can not secure it in this way, then it will come by the means I first suggested. I hope you understand me?"

"I do indeed, Mr. Relvason, but I beg to differ with you——"

"It is useless, sir," interrupted Relvason.

"But you sent for me?" replied Richard.

"But not to listen to a communistic speech."

"Beg your pardon, I intended to make no such speech. Good-day, sir," and Arbyght turned to go.

"Stay a moment." Relvason saw that his purpose was being foiled by his own want of tact.

"What do you wish, sir?" asked Richard.

"I will hear you briefly. Proceed."

"I simply desired to say, Mr. Relvason, that I agree with you fully that poverty can not be wholly abolished. I would not take poverty out of the world if I could, for, without it there would be no

incentive to labor, and labor is the supreme law of human existence, without which our present civilization would soon merge into barbarism. But great wealth and abject poverty do not produce healthy social conditions, and a diseased society is more menacing to the rich than to the poor. I believe the world is growing better; that the struggle going on in society between its opposing forces is constantly evolving new and better conditions, which are crystallized and hastened by organization——”

“I’ll hear no more—it’s useless to talk such stuff to me. I’ll tell you what I’ll do with you, Arbyght; you can be superintendent of my works if you break up——”

“Hold on, Mr. Relvason, I beg of you to say no more,” said Richard, with much warmth.

“You are a crazy madman——”

“No, no; not exactly that—a—a monomaniac,” suggested Spindle, who wished, for good reasons, to prevent a rupture.

“Anything you like, gentlemen,” responded Richard, smilingly.

“Will you drop this union, and be superintendent of my business?” said Relvason, abruptly.

“You insult me, sir!” replied Richard, quickly, with flashing eye and heightened color.

Spindle’s eyes came out of their seclusion again, and glowed like a white flame.

Relvason’s lips parted, showing the wolfish teeth, and his eyes glistened under the overhanging brows as he hissed out the words: “Would it be an insult to discharge you?”

“Such an act would simply sever my connection with a man who has lost my esteem and respect by making me a dishonorable proposal. I am ready to go, sir.”

Relvason, white with rage, turned to Spindle and said: "Spindle, pay this madman, and tell Rulless to give his place to the first man who seeks it;" then, turning to Arbyght, he added, "You will regret this act before to-day's sun goes down—madman, you will regret it!"

Richard received his pay and departed quietly from the office. It had come.

CHAPTER XX.

STILL AT BAY.

"Your name is Arbyght, I think?"

"Yes, sir, that's my name."

"Then I have no work for *you*."

Richard passed on, wondering as he went why the man placed so much stress upon the word "*you*." He wondered still more when, at the next shop, he was greeted with the same question and answer. At the third shop the programme was slightly varied, the proprietor ordering him to leave the premises—result the same, no work for *him*. What did it all mean? Was he being made the victim of a plot? He half realized that it must be so; but why? What had he done? Aimed and striven to be a better man, and counseled others to do likewise; endeavored to find a path by which he and his fellow-workmen could escape from the hideous embrace of the devil's best agent—poverty. Was this a crime? It seemed so. But, still hopeful, he went to the next shop. Yes, he could have work. No questions as to his name or history;

no insulting refusal. He thanked the man, and promising to be back soon, left the shop, reproving himself for having even in thought accused his neighbors of conspiring to prevent him from earning an honest living. As he reached the street, he saw Relvason enter the shop by a side door, and noticed that his horse was hitched to a post near by. He passed on, giving no thought to his former employer. He had not proceeded far, however, before he heard some one calling :

“Hi! Hi! Mister! I say!”

“Why, what is the matter?” asked Richard, in surprise, as, turning around, he saw the man of whom he had just secured work running rapidly toward him.

“You need not come to work,” gasped the man, well nigh out of breath, “I—I don’t think I want any more hands.”

“All right, sir,” responded Richard. “I see how it is; there’s a hound on my track; he is mad and has bitten you. The virus has acted upon you quickly.”

Burns was right when he wrote :

“Man’s inhumanity to man
Makes countless thousands mourn.”

Perhaps, being himself a workingman, he wrote from experience rather than from inspiration; or, might not the former have been an incentive to the latter?

Richard’s search for employment was continued until late in the afternoon, and in every instance proved unsuccessful. All the employers appeared to know him, seemed to have anticipated his coming and appeared to take pleasure in not only refusing him work but in insulting him.

He turned his steps toward home. Home? He

had none, and that thought coming with the rest added to his sorrow, helped to fill his heart with an unutterable sadness.

“Shall I leave the city?” he asked himself, as he wandered on. A great gust of wind swept down over the roofs of the adjacent buildings, sighed with a sullen moan through the trees, and passed down the street, sending back a low wave-like echo that seemed to say to him, No! No! No! He started, then laughed at the strange fancy and passed on.

Arriving at his boarding-house he found waiting for him a man of whom he had often heard. Alexander Fargood was large in body but elastic in movement, with a frank, earnest expression of the eye that indicated an evident abundance of good nature. It could be easily seen that he was an intelligent, honest, large-hearted man, who would realize more pleasure from the consciousness of having done a good act than from having succeeded in a business venture. Mr. Fargood was a large employer of labor. He believed that intelligent, sober, well-fed, respectably-dressed workingmen were more beneficial to an employer than those not so favored. His men worked but nine hours per day and quit at noon on Saturday. Twenty per cent. of the net profits of the business was annually set apart for the benefit of those who belonged to the profit-sharing class. Three years of steady service, efficient workmanship and good habits, were essential qualifications for admission to this class. One-fifth of the amount set apart was paid as a cash bonus; one-fifth was paid into an accident and sick fund; one-fifth went to a reading-room and library fund; and the remaining two-fifths were invested in government securities for the benefit of those who belonged to the

class. The members could only draw their share of this permanent fund at the end of fifteen years, unless they were sooner discharged or left the employment. The major portion of Mr. Fargoood's employees were members of the profit-sharing class, and were really copartners in the business, and worked and acted accordingly. There was no waste, no defective product to be seen in the establishment. The men were intelligent, competent and industrious. Strikes were unknown, while there existed between Mr. Fargoood and his men the most friendly relations. Each man was interested in the general success of the business, and labored assiduously to promote the common interest of all. Mr. Fargoood contended that owing to the superior excellence of the product turned out, the watchful care of the men, and the steadiness of their employment, the balance of the profits remaining after setting aside twenty per cent. for the men, was fully equal to if not greater than the net profits of the other employers in similar branches of the business.

"Being a stranger, you are no doubt surprised at my visit," said Mr. Fargoood.

"I doubt if anything that might happen could surprise me after to-day's experience," was the reply.

"I believe you," said Mr. Fargoood, "I know all about the conspiracy to drive you out of the city—was asked to participate."

"And you?"

"Refused, most decidedly."

"Thank God that there is at least one employer in this city too much man to turn hound," said Richard.

"Are you familiar with domestic work?"

"Perfectly."

"I need such a hand, could I secure your services?"

"You can, not only my services, but my thanks."

"When can you begin work?"

"Any time, at your convenience."

"To-morrow, then," said Mr. Fargood, and bidding Richard good afternoon he left.

Richard indulged in an audible soliloquy as he watched Mr. Fargood lose himself in the interminable crowd. "The sun will soon be down, I have not regretted it. Relvason has not driven me from the city, and I shall remain in spite of the hounds."

The chase cooled and for the next ten days the hounds did not bay on Richard's track, but the plotting went on.

Half an hour after Fargood's departure, Richard in fulfillment of his promise stood at the door of Soolfire cottage.

Grace received him kindly, joyfully.

"Oh! I am so glad you came," she said, "I have such good news to tell you. I am so happy, for I am going to work and earn my own living. I never knew what real happiness was until now."

"I am glad to hear it," replied Richard.

"Yes," she continued, "I am going to be independent, I am going to give music lessons, and Mrs. Soolfire says she can secure me all the sewing I can do. Oh! I am so delighted, and I know I'll be happier than an heiress whose only occupation is to dress and listen to empty compliments."

"I hope you may be just as happy as you now anticipate," replied Richard, "but do not allow your enthusiasm and imagination to weave too bright a future, for the path that leads to self-support is not always pleasant traveling for a woman."

Mrs. Soolfire came in at this moment, and after greeting Richard kindly, took part in a general

conversation, in the course of which she said that Grace was confining herself too closely to the house. Richard was led by this statement to invite Grace to take a walk. At first she seemed somewhat disinclined, but noticing his evident disappointment she arose and left the room and in a few moments returned equipped for the street.

The evening was calm and beautiful, the air was laden with a dry but deliciously-soft mistiness, a glimmering azure, hazy halo circled the horizon like a corona. The sun was sinking in the west and its last rays bathed the clouds in a rose-colored light, throwing back upon the heavens o'er the crest of a castellated cloud myriad millions of spear-like rays. Indian summer was nigh.

They involuntarily passed into Madison avenue, and were enjoying a very agreeable promenade—at least Richard was, though his companion was quite reserved, notwithstanding the quaint and cynical humor of the man at her side. For some times she had been silent, being evidently more intent on her own thoughts than on what Richard was saying. But she was suddenly startled by a sweet, silvery voice.

“Good-evening, Grace.”

“Good evening, Miss Geldamo,” she replied, in a nervous manner, and walked on without looking at the speaker, while the young lady she had addressed as Miss Geldamo stood still and gazed after her with a look of inexpressible astonishment.

“Mr. Arbyght, let us go home now; I am not feeling very well.”

Richard complied without giving any evidence that he had noticed what had just occurred.

“Mr. Arbyght,” breaking a long silence, “on the avenue we have just left reside many with whom, a few days ago, I was on terms of intimacy.

Since then, however, things have changed. Our paths hereafter must be widely divergent. I am now, to use a phrase I once heard, a stray splinter chipped by fate from the great rock of caste and hurled far into the valley of toil. I do not regret the change, but, though poor, I am too proud to have it appear that I wish or care to continue any relation or association formed in the past, no matter how hard the sundering of those ties may be. There may be some among them who regard position as I do, and my opinion in that respect has not been formed since my voluntary change of fortune and condition in life. I never had much respect for assumed social prominence, or any position in society not based on intelligence and moral and social worth. Still, I do not care to continue these associations, even if solicited to do so, for fear my action might be misconstrued, and ascribed to other motives than friendship."

Richard could not help admiring her firmness and spirit.

"But who is this Miss Geldamo?" he casually asked.

"Vida Geldamo is the daughter of Mr. Geldamo, the banker, and is the dearest, sweetest girl that ever lived," said Grace.

Richard had seen her, and although he said nothing further on the subject, yet he was inclined even then to think Grace was right. They reached the cottage shortly afterward, and, after taking leave of Grace, Richard proceeded to his boarding-house. The sun had been down some time, but the hounded workman had not yet regretted having refused Relvason's offer.

Richard's discharge created intense excitement among the members of the union, which was fearfully aggravated when it became known that he

was discharged simply because he was a member of a labor organization. A special meeting was called, and a resolution introduced to call out all of Relvason's men until justice was done an injured and aggrieved member.

It was with the greatest difficulty that Richard prevailed upon them to let the matter rest. He argued that he had secured work from a better and more honorable man ; that he would not work for Relvason, even if reinstated ; that he was opposed to precipitating men of families into a difficulty when there was no occasion for it ; that it was better that one man should suffer and hundreds be spared ; that he did not regard it good unionism for one man to throw a hundred men out of employment, and stop their families' supply of bread, simply to gratify a feeling against a man for whom he would not work, were he permitted to do so ; that it would be time enough to resort to such desperate measures when it became evident that Relvason intended to victimize others as he had him. In that event, the assertion of the principle involved would become a matter of self-preservation. " But," he continued, " in conclusion, I am grieved to say that this trouble was caused by a traitor. I know him. I saw him go to Relvason's shop by the merest accident, immediately after our last meeting. He is in the room now ; yet I will not name him. He has a wife and four children. For their sakes I will spare him. They are innocent of his guilt, and should not suffer for his crime. After he leaves this hall to-night, let him remain away, and he is spared ; but if he attempts to abuse or trespass upon our patience further he will be exposed."

The open charge that there was a spy in camp created a sensation, and many of the members

insisted on Richard exposing him then and there.

“Arbyght is right,” said Tom Castaway. “We know that there is a spy in our camp, but he has been warned not to come again. Let him go, boys; we can’t afford to waste ammunition upon such small game.”

The members finally agreed that Richard’s view of the whole matter was the wisest, and contented themselves with a resolution to be doubly watchful and discreet in the future.

CHAPTER XXI.

A RESCUE AND ITS RESULTS.

Richard was on hand at Fargood’s shop the next morning as agreed upon, and from the first the relation of the employer and employé was of the most harmonious character, and continued to grow closer and closer as the days came and went. The workman was active, vigilant, and provident of the employer’s interest. He labored, if not with the same zest, at least with the same assiduity and care, as if he were both employer and workman. His conduct toward Mr. Fargood was on all occasions manly, but independent; while the latter, in just appreciation of his services honestly given and his sterling worth as a workman, paid him willingly even more than the price agreed upon between them. The bearing of Fargood as an employer was never that of a *master*. Trusting to Arbyght’s honesty and honor, he left him entirely

to himself after having once signified what he wished to have done, and satisfied himself that the workman was able and willing to do it. There was no impertinent, supercilious surveillance; no impudent, domineering bossism manifested by Alexander Fargoood in his dealings with those whom he employed. In a word, the relations existing between him and his employés were those that should ever exist between employers and employés—mutual and reciprocal independence and dependence.

One day there stopped before Fargoood's place of business a handsome carriage drawn by a spirited team of horses. Perched on the driver's seat, erect and stately, sat a living, breathing automaton, clad in a dark-brown, close-fitting coat, gorgeous with rows of large, silvered buttons crested with an unusually large G. The legs of this automaton were encased in close-fitting knee-breeches, of the same material and color as the coat, that reached below the knees and then doubled into a roll that formed a protuberance that resembled a monstrously developed ring-bone, or the flange joint of a shaft. The breeches were ornamented with large buttons, also crested with a big G. A pair of highly-polished boots, a pair of buckskin gauntlets, and a high silk hat encased in a wide band, clasped with a big G-shaped silver buckle, completed the uniform of this liveried nonentity, samples of which are so frequently seen on the streets of the cities of the Republic. The whole equipage, though considered magnificent and quite the thing by the so-called *elite*, the *recherche* portion of our incipient aristocracy, was, nevertheless, extravagantly gaudy and decidedly *outré*. It was simply a rolling block of bank stock.

The liveried flunkey got down from his carriage

perch with painful stateliness, and with a pompous swagger walked into the office and asked for the proprietor.

"I am the man you seek. What can I do for you?" said Mr. Fargood, coming from behind his desk.

"Mr. Geldamo wishes to see you at once," replied the livery-shackled lackey, with a demonstrative air.

"Who the devil is Mr. Geldamo?" responded Fargood. He knew the banker by reputation at least, but he was somewhat nettled by the fellow's impudent manner.

"My master, sir," said the flunkey, with a triumphant look and a self-congratulatory tone—the look and tone seeming to indicate that because of his connection with so great a man as Geldamo, even though in a menial capacity, he was a person to be respected and envied.

"Well, where is your master?"

"In his carriage, sir," said the servant, opening the office door and disclosing the gorgeous equipage.

Fargood approached the carriage, preceded by the flunkey who opened the door, when its occupant leaning forward filled with his head and the upper part of his body the opening—fitted into it—giving the side of the carriage the appearance of a large ebony-framed picture.

In appearance and movement Mr. Geldamo was the very apotheosis of dignity. Tall and spare, always dressed in immaculate black, his head long and full above the ears, deep-set eyes, with a cold, calculating expression, and a face deeply furrowed. Whether moving, standing or sitting, the whole man seemed a walking stack of dollars. Every thing about him was redolent with the odor of

money. He gave the impression that he measured all things by a golden standard, by the rule of three—money, interest and rent.

His business with Mr. Fargoood was soon transacted. In addition to being a prominent banker, he was also an importer and wholesale dealer in choice wines and liquors, and as some of the packages in his warehouse were in a leaky condition, he wished a competent man sent to put them in a proper shape again. Fargoood promised to send a man the next morning, and the picture gracefully dropped out of its ebony frame back into its padded, cushioned seat; the door was carefully closed by the uniformed knight of the stable, who then mounted his seat with becoming dignity, grasped the reins, and the carriage rolled away.

The next morning Richard appeared at the Geldamo warehouse, and began operations upon the leaky casks. On the following day Mr. Geldamo asked him if he would go up to his residence and examine some casks containing rare old wine that were stored in the cellar. Richard said it was immaterial to him where he worked. A few hours later he was driven to the banker's residence, which he found closely resembled its owner in many respects, especially in the summing up! for as a whole it appeared an aggregation of dollars in repose.

Parallel with the avenue extended a massive spear-pointed iron fence, set in a foundation of solid cut-stone. The grounds enclosed by it rose in a gentle slope for some distance, then merged into a level plateau, in the center of which stood the Geldamo mansion. The architectural style of the residence was the modern Italian. It was built of stone, elaborately cut in quaint and beautiful designs, and from an angle formed by the main

portion of the building and a wing rose a lofty tower of artistic proportions. From foundation to cornice the building in all its details was as perfect externally as skill and money could make it—a veritable Aladdin's palace. The main entrance which was reached by a broad crescent-shaped carriage road, was an architectural study in itself, with its exquisitely carved columns of marble, and its perfectly formed arches.

In passing through the grounds, Richard saw a man on top of the tower adjusting a flag-staff, but absorbed in his contemplation of the chaste architectural beauty of this modern palace, he paid but little attention to him. However, duty soon put an end to his interest in pediments, cornices, grand archways, vestibules and porticoes, and from their contemplation he passed into the cellars of the mansion and began a more prosaic inspection. While he was busily engaged in the lower story, another scene was being enacted overhead.

The interior was in entire harmony with the exterior in the style of its finish and furnishing. On one side of the great hall there were double parlors, thirty-six feet long, eighteen feet wide, and fourteen feet high, separated by an elliptic arch, supported by slender marble columns, between which was suspended a heavy curtain, woven in the far-off looms of the Orient, and rich in quaint design and perfect blending of color. The ceilings were finished in fresco, and represented open domes through which white fleecy clouds could be seen floating through the azure sky. Over the edge of the domes' circular openings, beautiful flowers and rare, luxuriant vines seemed to be hanging down into the room; and so perfect was the skill of the artist that, at first glance, it seemed as if it were a glimpse of nature itself. Soft luxurious carpets of

velvet, with wood-brown ground, over which wild flowers seemed to have been scattered, covered the floors. The walls were tinted to harmonize with the ceilings and finished in panels, in which were hung rare and beautiful paintings. Costly chandeliers, furniture of rosewood and mahogany, luxurious couches, groups of statuary, and a rare collection of bric-a-brac aided in completing the symphony of color and design. The balance of this abode of luxury was in keeping with the apartment just described. Within its walls, surrounded by all the accompaniments that refined taste could suggest and procure, it did not seem possible that any discordant thought or any shadow could come to mar the pleasure of the occupants.

At the piano in the outer drawing-room sat a young lady, not more than twenty-two years of age, a bright, vivacious, sparkling, beautiful type of girlhood, a flower of that geranium school of beauty so peculiar to our country. The forehead was high, arched and smooth, the face sweetly feminine, earnest, confiding and dignified. The general expression of the features was exquisitely delicate, but from her eyes there shone a steady luster that gave unmistakable evidence of a stronger soul-power than a casual examination would accord.

A few feet from her, leaning against one of the marble columns that supported the arch of a bay window, stood a young man about seven years her senior. He was of medium height, lanky body and slender limbs, with a head so small as to make him an object of dread to every hatter in the city. His face was of the hatchet order of physiognomy, with a high, narrow, retreating forehead. But his nose and mouth were the striking features, both being too large for his face, giving it a sharp, knowing expression. The peculiarly no-

ticeable thing about him, however, was his voice. Deep as the diapason of a church organ, the smallest word would roll out with a largeness that made it sound like a whole sentence doubled up into a roll and issued with one effort by a giant. There was a volume and ponderosity about his voice that attracted the attention of all who heard it. The insignificance of the man, physically and mentally considered, was largely overbalanced by the man acoustically considered; for no matter how much one despised the absence of physical power and mental originality, still when he spoke, and the deep, bass intonation of his voice broke upon the startled ear like a note from the great Haarlem organ, and its prolonged vibrations rang through every nerve in the body, it led one to at least recognize power in the voice.

"Miss Geldamo," said the man of voice, but the words were so unexpected that she almost sprang from her seat—the usual effect when one was not thinking about the voice—

"You have a beautiful, an Elysian home here."

"It is thought to be a very pleasant place," she replied in an abstracted manner, her eyes following the retreating figure of Richard Arbyght, who just then passed by the side window.

"And truly so considered," said Mr. Allsound.

"Papa is very kind and good," slowly replied the lady, more in answer to her first remark than from a desire to continue the conversation.

"To my mind," continued Mr. Allsound, "there is one thing lacking to make your existence here completely happy."

"And pray what may that be?" she said, not that she cared, but that courtesy forced her to ask.

"I think the amount of comfort and happiness derived from property or the place called home, is measured by one's degree of ownership in it," he replied, after a little hesitation.

Miss Geldamo colored slightly, but, not answering, Mr. Allsound ventured a little further.

"What I mean is, that the climax of happiness, as far as home is concerned, consists in being mistress of it."

"I have no desire to ever be a greater mistress than I am now. I have all the liberty, all the power I am capable of keeping within lawful restraint; more, I fear, would spoil me."

"You do violence to your prudence, your discretion, and natural goodness of heart; I am sure that if you were Empress of all the Russias you would not abuse your power. I, at least, would have no hesitancy in obeying your mandates; on the contrary, I would esteem it a privileged honor to be the subject, aye, the slave of so beautiful and enchanting a sovereign."

"Mercy! what noise is that?" she cried, as she sprang from her seat, at the same instant that Mr. Allsound threw himself on his knees at her feet.

"There it is again!" she said, with bated breath, as a wild, unearthly scream rent the outer air.

The next moment the door leading into the hall was thrown open, and Mary Marmane, her maid, appeared, trembling in every limb, her face horror-stricken and blanched with fright.

"What has happened, Mary? Speak quickly!" said Miss Geldamo, going toward her with rapid steps.

"Oh! Miss Vida!" was all she could say, and, turning, she ran out into the grounds again, followed almost as rapidly by Vida and Mr. Allsound,

only to see her clapping her hands and uttering a despairing cry.

"Mary, what is the matter?" cried Vida, as she grasped the girl tightly by the arm.

"The tower! the tower!" said the girl; and, looking upward, they saw a man clinging to the eaves of the tower, which projected over the heavy cornice. His body was swaying about three feet from the wall of the building, and fully sixty feet from the walk below, upon which he was inevitably destined to be dashed, as soon as the weight of his body overcame the power in the muscles of his arms.

Vida looked a moment in terror and awe; an awful paleness came over her face; then, turning to Mr. Allsound, she said, in trembling tones, while tears burst from her eyes:

"It is Paul! Oh, can't you save him?"

But she might as well have addressed a post, as Allsound was incapable of movement; his knees knocked together, his teeth chattered, and his whole frame trembled like a leaf. She turned from him toward Mary, but Mary had disappeared. Suddenly a man appeared on the roof of the tower. Vida clapped her hands and cried for joy:

"He is saved! He is saved!"

The man looked around, but did not move.

"Why do you hesitate? Why don't you save him?" Vida cried, but he shook his head and disappeared.

Alas! the roof of the tower is too steep; he can not reach him; it would be sure death to attempt it. A great blank falls upon Vida's soul, and her fluttering heart almost ceased to beat; the man's strength was fast ebbing; he would soon fall. At this instant Mary came running from behind the mansion, closely followed by Richard Arbyght. At the sight of the latter, Vida's face brightened

slightly; and, advancing toward him with outstretched hands, she said, with a look and voice so beseechingly imploring that he never forgot the look, act, or tone:

“*You will save him?*”

“Miss, I will try,” he said, quickly, and then giving one glance at the suspended man, he cried as loudly as he could, “Hold on two minutes longer and you are safe.” Turning hurriedly, he seized Mary almost rudely, and rushing with her towards the house, he said: “Lead on to the tower, to the tower!”

The girl needed no repetition of the command. She sped on before him like a frightened gazelle, bounding up the broad steps, on through the vestibule, past marble columns, up the wide staircase, up other staircases, until they reached the first chamber of the tower. In this room there was a large, arched window, fronting the square formed by the main building and wing, and directly under the suspended man. The lower sash of the window Arbyght threw up with a sharp jerk, and stepped out upon the projecting stone sill; putting his large, thick felt hat on his clenched left hand, he drove it through the glass of both sashes, which he grasped with a firm grip, planted his feet firmly upon the stone sill, while his body swung out from the wall forty-five feet from the ground. He was not a second too soon, for just then the man’s hold, which had been slowly giving way for the last two minutes, suddenly relaxed, and, with a half-suppressed cry, he dropped like a ball of metal—the strong, sinewy arm of the workman shot out, grasped the falling man by the waist; the sash bent outward with a creaking sound, but did not break. Arbyght’s arm dropped slightly and quivered under the

weight and momentum of the falling man, but his body remained as firm and immovable as a pillar of iron.

"Saved!" came up from below, but so faint that it seemed the echo of a sigh.

"Saved!" came from the room behind him, in louder but not less tremulous tones.

"Saved!" came from the man on his arm, in a husky, broken voice.

"Saved!" he re-echoed himself, as he placed the rescued man on a sofa in the tower chamber.

CHAPTER XXII.

AFTER MANY DAYS.

The rescued man was about twenty-four years of age, light and slender, though tall and well-formed in limb and features, full face, high forehead, sparkling eyes, and laughing mouth. He was completely exhausted, and large drops of perspiration stood out on his face like crystal beads. After regaining his breath, he struggled to his feet, extended his hand to Richard, and, in a voice thick with emotion, said :

"You have saved my life."

"I had not a moment to spare," replied Richard, as his hand was grasped by the rescued man and shook heartily.

"I can not sufficiently thank you in words ; I won't try," he said ; "it would be a beggarly failure were I to attempt it ; but I hope, ere either of us is dead, to convince you by living acts, and

not by words that die, of my thankfulness and appreciation of your humanity and daring."

"If the consciousness of having saved a life from destruction is not sufficient reward for the performance of the act, then I hope never to be rewarded," said Richard.

"Your words are as noble as your deed. What may I call you?"

"My name is Richard Arbyght."

"And mine is Paul Geldamo; from henceforth the friend at all times and under all circumstances of the man who saved his life."

"Amen!" cried Mary, who having disappeared as soon as she saw Paul safe, now returned, followed by Vida and Allsound.

"Oh, Paul!" exclaimed Vida, falling upon her brother's breast and weeping for joy.

"You must thank our noble friend, Vida. Mr. Arbyght, my sister Vida."

* Turning from her brother to Richard, she laid her soft, velvety hand in his muscular palm, and with a bewitching blush, said sweetly:

"How shall I thank you? We are all under great obligations to you."

She looked enchantingly lovely, entrancingly beautiful through her tears and blushes. The effect on Richard was magnetic—electrical—he essayed to speak, but only stammered, and blushing like a girl, he dropped the little hand that rested in his, and turned toward the window, his heart filled with new and conflicting emotions.

It was a strange scene: Vida in an elegant costume, half laughing, half crying and blushing by turns; Paul looking bewildered, and not knowing whether to laugh or to cry; Mary actually crying; Mr. Allsound looking ill at ease and vapidly stupid,

and the hero of the hour vainly attempting to see something in the vacuity of space.

Being at work in a close place, and the day being quite warm, Richard had divested himself of all superfluous clothing, and when summoned by Mary, ran from his labor without thought of his appearance, and now stood before these people in dark pants, and a tight-fitting cotton shirt, which adhered so closely to his person as to resemble the drapery in which sculptors are wont to clothe a statue; the corded muscles of his chest, neck and arms standing out in bold relief like the ridges of marble on statues of Hercules. He stood there, a man of brawn, muscle and virility, the embodiment of masculine power, force, courage and physical stamina, each and all of which attributes claim the admiration of woman and exact her love; for as woman actually adores perfect manhood, she admires and loves those physical traits in which alone genuine manhood inheres. If, therefore, Vida Geldamo and Mary Marmane felt a secret, instinctive admiration for the manly workman suddenly spring into life within them, it could be regarded only as the tribute woman ever pays to manhood, and not a desire on their part to incontinently fall in love with him.

Richard turned to go below and resume his work, but as he did so he discovered that not only was his left arm covered with blood, but that it was bleeding profusely. Vida made the same discovery at the same instant, but she did not scream or faint. She merely said, in a sweet, tender voice:

"Why, Mr. Arbyght, you are hurt. How thoughtless we were not to notice it before."

Mary was at once dispatched for water, a sponge, and some linen, and when she had returned Vida, with her own hands, carefully and tenderly dressed the wounded arm, which, though browned by ex-

posure, was as shapely and symmetrical as a woman's. While she worked the dark eyes of the workman rested upon her with a look of involuntary but manly admiration; but, as if conscious of his gaze, she never once raised her head, and when through she said softly, with a peculiar *naivete* or unconscious ingenuousness:

"I must be your doctor. You must come again when it needs dressing." Then, with a very crimson face, she fled precipitately from the room.

Richard left immediately after, promising Paul before he departed to be at home on the following evening.

It would prove a futile and useless task to analyze the conflicting emotions of Richard's mind after he left the Geldamo mansion. To Richard himself Richard was at that moment an incomprehensible mystery. At first he felt a strange feeling or sensation creep slowly through every fiber and nerve. This was followed by a sense of having discovered within himself something of whose existence he never dreamed, accompanied by a vague uncertainty of mind and a heaviness around the heart. Was Love making him a victim of his mischievous pranks? Alas! we fear so, as Richard concluded in his own mind, ere he reached his boarding-house, that he would willingly run his arm through a double window every day in the week, provided Vida Geldamo would dress it.

The next morning he found his arm so inflamed and painful that all idea of work had to be abandoned, at least for that day. Early in the afternoon he received a letter, the perusal of which from that hour changed the whole current of his being. Mad, bewildered with a great joy, he rushed, almost flew, to Soolfire cottage. Grace was not in. He sat down and meditated. Pres-

ently he grew calmer and felt glad that Grace was out.

Shortly afterward she came in and manifested in an unmistakable manner her pleasure at seeing him, and frankly told him so.

"The pleasure is mutual," said Richard; "but I have an incentive, of which you are not aware, that renders the pleasure of this meeting, at least to me, greater than any previous one."

Grace regarded him with a puzzled and serio-comic expression for a moment or two. Then, breaking into a sweet, silvery laugh, she said: "You are enigmatical; at least, not clear. Please explain."

"My language may seem strange, and no doubt it is," replied Richard; "however, I hope to be able to convince you that I mean just what I say."

"But why so verbose and circumlocutory? You horrid men always keep one in suspense. Now I was glad you came because I was so utterly, wretchedly lonesome that I cried all this forenoon, and went out after dinner to see if a walk in the fresh air would not relieve my mind. Oh! it is so hard, so hard to be all alone in this great, wide world."

Her voice was so sad, and conveyed such a sense of loneliness, that Richard was glad she ceased, but she continued, before he could reply:

"There! I have been candid and ingenuous; surely you will be equally so. Why are you so pleased to see me on this particular occasion?"

"Because I don't think either of us is so much alone in the world after all."

"You are as lucid as the Delphic oracle, if not more so," answered Grace.

"I would like to ask you a few questions," he said, imploringly.

"You can ask as many as you please, provided we can reach this mysterious kernel, which you have so impenetrably hidden with a rind of ambiguous words."

"To begin with, are you sure that you have no recollection prior to your adoption by Edna Relvason?"

"Nothing tangible or real," replied Grace, "sometimes I have faint glimmerings of forms and scenes, but they come and go so rapidly and are so indistinct and indefinable that they leave no lasting impression. It is like a flash of lightning that rends the dark clouds for a moment, and lights up the world with a vivid glare for an instant, only to leave a deeper gloom than before."

"Can you not remember an old gray-haired man, taking you from the arms of a dark-haired, weeping boy?" asked Richard, with a slight tremor in his voice and an incipient tear in the corner of his eye.

Grace gazed at him fixedly for an instant, and answered:

"Your question has given at least some form and shape to a memoric shadow that has often flitted through my mind, but it is yet too indistinct; I fear it is useless, I have often tried, but always failed to give shape to these misty forms."

"Do you remember having even seen a picture—you called mother?" asked Richard.

Grace looked at him in amazement, his voice was actually husky.

"No," she calmly replied, "the farthest back I can distinctly remember was when I must have been nearly six years old; I had a gold locket or medal, I can't say which. When or how I came by it I am unable to say; but I remember that aunt Edna scolded me one morning for having lost

it—I also cried myself sick over it—but it was never found.”

“Could you recognize that locket if you saw it?” asked Richard, eagerly, in a low, earnest tone.

Grace was startled at his look and manner, and wondering much at the strange questions he asked, she replied: “I don’t think I could; but why do you ask these questions?”

“Because,” said Richard, “I think I have that locket,” handing her, as he spoke, his mother’s locket. Grace gave a little start, and examined it carefully.

“I am not certain,” she answered, “its first appearance struck me forcibly, but I can not say positively that this is the locket I lost.”

Richard advanced toward her, and taking the locket from her hands, he opened it and disclosed to her astonished, bewildered eyes what seemed a correct but faded picture of herself.

Grace sprang to her feet, and, with a queer brilliancy in her eye and a peculiar ring in her voice, looked Richard full in the face as she said: “Mr. Arbyght, what does this mean?”

“It means,” replied Richard, “that this is a picture of my mother, of your mother—and——”

“And,” Grace hurridly interrupted, “that you are my brother and I am your sister?”

“Do you not see it? Can you not believe it?” Richard replied, with beseeching, loving emphasis.

Grace again looked him full in the face, and there saw an overflowing heart—a brother’s affectionate look, the imprisoned and pent-up love of a lifetime pleading in the glow of his eyes, and, throwing her arms wildly around his neck, she exclaimed, in joyous but tearful accents:

“It is all a dream, but my soul tells me you

“speak the truth. I see it, I believe it; my brother—my own dear brother!”

CHAPTER XXIII.

HUNTED DOWN.

Thus were two long separated hearts united at last. Thus in a single moment was spanned a gulf of eighteen years. Again Grace wept and clung, as she wept and clung that bright autumn morning eighteen years before—clung and wept on the breast from which she was so cruelly torn—but now, in joy and happiness, not, as then, in grief and sorrow. The ways of Providence are inscrutable, but they are ways of omnipotent wisdom. The arrows of fate are unerringly shot; their flight may be slow, but they never miss. Had not Richard's sister been taken from him as she was, the incidents upon which this tale is founded would not have occurred. The visit of Edna Relvason to the little village of Silverville, and all the relations that grew out of it, was a part and parcel of the woof and warp through which fate, in this instance, worked out its inevitable and certain results. For these two, so long parted, the clouds had drifted away, and for the present, at least, all was sunshine and gladness.

Grace—Bertha now—was the first to speak. She drew her hand across her forehead, gazed at Richard with misty eyes, and, in a faint, soft voice, said :

“It is so like a dream.”

"And yet not a dream," said Richard, reassuringly.

"A most delightful, elysian dream," Bertha replied, "and yet, if I should awake to find it but a dream it would kill me," and, turning suddenly, she looked at Richard, but her doubt was quieted by a loving smile.

"It would be cruel to deceive me; you are sure there is no mistake?" Bertha asked, slowly, but pathetically.

Richard replied by handing her the following letters:

"SILVERVILLE, Nov. 3, 186—.

"Your note of October 29 I received this morning, and hasten to reply.

"Your sister did not die. The story was a pure fabrication. I saw her myself on two occasions; once in Cleveland, and later in Chicago. Ever since you went to the Army, I have been trying to find some clue to your whereabouts. As you will see by the enclosed letter, I had a duty to perform.

"Your sister is stopping with my brother, Alvan Relvason, No. ——. You can easily see her by calling; she goes by the name of Relvason, and is supposed to be one of the family.

"Yours respectfully,

"ETHELIND MORRIS.

"RICHARD ARBYGHT, Chicago."

The letter to which Mrs. Morris referred was in Edna Relvason's handwriting, and as it will enter somewhat into the sequence of our story, it is given:

"CLEVELAND, April 17, 186—.

"DEAR SISTER: I wrote you a long letter yesterday.

There is no change in my condition to-day, but I can not die happy until I have begun an act of justice, which I command you to see consummated. I want you to see or write to young Arbyght concerning his sister. She may not care now to acknowledge the relationship, but I want to make reparation to him. I have willed Grace \$10,000. Will write you again to-morrow, if I am not worse. There is no possible chance of recovery—that fell destroyer, consumption, is incurable. I am resigned to my fate.

“Your affectionate sister,

“EDNA.

“P. S.—Tell Arbyght that his sister is alive, and tell him where he may find her; also pray him to forgive the deception I practiced on him.

“E.”

The last letter affected Bertha inexpressibly. When she had finished reading it and looked up, Richard saw in her face no lingering trace of doubt. She was convinced. She handed the letters back, but he requested her to keep and preserve them; and gave her the locket, saying as he did so :

“Dear sister, for eighteen years I have carefully preserved this souvenir, and I never thought I would part with it as willingly as I do now.”

“What an odd, but precious thing it is,” she said, seriously. *“I won’t open it for two whole days, for I know I should cry if I did, and I am so happy, so selfishly happy; poor mama! you must tell me all about her——”*

“There! there! You are crying now. I will tell you all about her, but not to-day, Bertha, for I have an important engagement and must go.”

“An engagement?”

“ Oh ! it is not with a lady ; it is with a young gentleman ; and by the way, I think you know him ; at least, you know his sister.”

Bertha blushed in confusion, and began examining the locket very attentively. Presently a shade passed over her face, there was a little spasmodic sound and contraction in the throat, after which she was quite pale. Richard was too close an observer of human nature not to divine the cause of her blushes, paleness, and silence ; but he did not allude to or apparently notice it, and took his leave at once, promising to return on the following day, but before he reached the gate, her silvery voice rang merrily upon his ear, as she called laughingly from the window :

“ Don’t forget to-morrow.”

When Richard reached home he found Paul Geldamo waiting for him on the side-walk.

“ They told me you were not in, so I thought I would wait for you outside, as by so doing I could keep an eye on Jespra ;” as he spoke the last word, a beautiful, dark bay-mare, attached to a light, covered buggy, and hitched to a post close by, arched her neck and gave a little neigh as if in answer to her name.

Richard excused his absence by going into ecstasies over Jespra. “ But what a queer name,” he said.

“ You see,” said Paul, patting the mare fondly on the neck, “ she is always ready to do whatever I require of her, so I called her this name. It is a horrid, vulgar contraction of “ *Je suis Prêt*,” he added, by way of explanation.

Nothing would satisfy Paul but that Richard should take a drive around the city, and though the latter complied, it was with evident reluctance. Paul was moody, gloomy and abstracted, except

when he passed a lady, and then he looked expectant and anxious. He acted as if he was looking for somebody, and Richard thought he knew whom, but said nothing.

They finally reached Paul's home, and he urged Richard to go in with him ; the latter felt he could not refuse without giving offense, and much against his judgment, he followed him into the house, his blood tingling in his veins and a strange, peculiar sensation in the region of his heart.

Vida received him with a cheerful smile, but paused irresolutely for just a moment before she spoke. The alteration produced in the appearance of the man by his change of dress was quite marked, and something in his appearance riveted her attention ; she extended her hand, however, with a smile of welcome, and said :

"How is your arm to-day?" and, with an arch look, added, "I am to be your physician, you know."

"It is much better, thanks to your skill," he replied.

In her evening dress of gray silk and white lace, with her neck encircled by a soft, dainty ruche of the same material, and without other ornament than a bunch of roses fastened in her corsage, she was so beautiful, so captivating, that Richard felt that there was no woman in the world so fair. They chatted pleasantly and freely for some time. When Richard was about to leave, Vida said :

"Did I not see you on the street with Grace Relvason a few evenings since?" but before Richard could reply, she added, "You must not think me impertinent, for she is the only friend I ever cared for except Mary, and her disappearance from home and her inexplicable conduct that evening worries me very much."

"You are right, Miss Geldamo; I remember the evening to which you refer."

"Where is poor Grace, and how is she? We know why she left, as Miss Relvason has gossiped considerably about it; but we can't understand why she should remain aloof from her friends. I will never forgive her. She ought to know it would not make any difference with me, if it did with others."

"Her reasons are peculiar ones, which I may some time explain to you; but here is Paul with Jespra, and our delightful *tete-a-tete* must, I am sorry to say, have an end."

Richard had remained half an hour, and could not say whether he was glad or sorry when he took his leave. He could not recall all that was said; he only knew that never had a face seemed so lovable, eyes so soft and tender, and voice so pleasant and kind.

Vida accompanied him to the door, and, as he was going down the steps, she said, warningly:

"Remember that I must know all about Grace."

That night Richard resolved to see Miss Geldamo no more. He was fully aware now of the direction his feelings were taking, and, realizing the difference in their respective social positions, he knew that it would be worse than madness, worse, supremely worse than folly, to continue an acquaintance that would end only in pain for him. He did not arrive at this conclusion because he felt that his affection would be an unworthy offering, but because the love that was growing within him was too unselfish to ask one so situated to share his hard lot, even if that love was reciprocated. But, feeling under an obligation, he wrote to her next morning a respectful but formal note, saying that circumstances he did not feel at liberty to mention

would prevent him from calling upon her again, but, to fulfill an implied promise, he desired to inform her that Grace was his long-lost sister; but that in view of her changed condition it was thought best that they should not meet again.

After mailing this note, he proceeded to the shop. Mr. Fargoood met him with a troubled look, and, in response to a question as to the cause, returned an evasive answer. But Richard half suspected the truth, and bluntly asked Mr. Fargoood if his presence in the shop was proving injurious to his interests.

"Well, to tell the truth," said Mr. Fargoood, "they are giving me a good deal of trouble, but I think I shall overcome it. I don't care personally, but you see most of the men are as much interested in this business as I am. They may complain."

"You shall have no trouble on my account, Mr. Fargoood," said Richard; "you have acted too nobly and too generously, for me to act otherwise than generously by you."

"I don't want you to leave; I think I shall circumvent them yet."

"What have they been doing?" asked Richard.

"That I am at a loss to understand, myself. All I know is that I can not sell a package in the city; a discrimination is made against my work by all consumers, which, it is hinted, will only cease when you are discharged."

Mr. Fargoood was in effect boycotted, though that term was unknown in those days.

"I am sorry, indeed, to leave, but under the circumstances I could not remain."

"You can't feel any worse about the matter than I do. I hate to lose you," replied Fargoood.

sorrowfully, and then added, "if I can ever be of any service to you, command me."

The Leviathan of greed and oppression had not plotted in vain.

A few hours later Richard might be seen standing on the corner of the junction of Washington and La Salle streets, in a thoughtful reverie. He had resolved upon seeing his sister and leaving the city that afternoon. His soul was torn with conflicting and changing emotions, his brows were knit, his face was protean—being sad, joyous, and fierce alternately; and although he neither observed nor noticed any of the numerous passers-by, who composed the everchanging, bustling, driving, boisterous crowd that surged and swayed, jammed and scrouged, pushed and hustled each other, he was himself particularly observed. In fact he had been, unnoticed by himself, dogged and hounded all the morning.

A block or two from where he stood, and commanding a good view of his position, was a fashionable photograph gallery. On this particular morning Miss Vida Geldamo and a lady friend had called at the gallery, to have a talk with the noted artist about some photographs they desired to have taken. In the midst of an elaborate dissertation by the artist on the relative merits of different positions, Alvan Relvason rushed into the room, panting and perspiring freely. The ladies and the artist were somewhat startled by his sudden appearance and evident agitation; but so great was his preoccupation of mind that he did not notice Miss Geldamo or her friend. He called the great positionist to the window and said:

"Do you see that man with gray clothes and dark felt hat?"

"I do," was the reply.

"Take his negative," said Relvason, "and I will give you one hundred dollars."

The eyes of the artist sparkled as he replied, "I will do so in two minutes," and he set to work at once to prepare a plate.

This strange conversation was overheard by Vida Geldamo, and she marveled much that any one should be so dishonorable as to take such an unwarranted liberty with the person of another. She advanced to the window and looking in the direction indicated, saw to her surprise and amazement, Richard Arbyght. She understood it all in an instant, as she had been informed by Estella Relvason of the hatred her father had for the stalwart young workman, and she determined if possible to prevent the consummation of the outrage. The day being warm the windows were raised, and leaning out the nearest one she tried to attract Richard's attention by various feminine devices. Happening to raise his head he saw a woman making strange motions with her hands and handkerchief, but he did not for a moment suppose they were intended for him; looking again he recognized the fair signaler. Immediately his face brightened and he raised his hat respectfully, and by this act aided the photographer who just then brought his profile to a proper focus on the lens of the camera.

Vida felt that instead of aiding she had injured her friend, and the reflection grieved her.

A moment after the artist returned and was in raptures over the perfection of the negative, which he submitted to Relvason's inspection.

"Small, but good," was the laconic comment, and the lips parted and the wolfish teeth gleamed savagely.

"We can remedy that," said the artist, confidently.

“ Ah ! Miss Geldamo, is that you ? ” said Relvason, seeing her for the first time. He would not have seen her then had she not approached him.

“ May I look at this wonderful negative ? ” she asked timidly, but with a strange light in her eye.

“ Certainly, Miss Geldamo ; certainly. ”

She took it to the open window to obtain a better view of it. “ Why, it is perfect ; it is splendid, ” she exclaimed. “ Do see it, ” she said to her companion ; but in passing it to her, it by some means, perhaps best known to herself, slipped from her fingers, and in endeavoring to catch it ere it reached the floor, it glanced from her hand obliquely, striking the outer edge of the window sill—a little scream from Vida—a slight pause, and the faint sound of crashing glass came up from the paved walk below.

CHAPTER XXIV.

ON LOVE'S THRESHOLD.

“ Oh ! ” exclaimed Vida, in evident alarm, “ what have I done ? ” and, apparently very much frightened, she turned to her friend, and did what the superficial observer would least expect, threw her arms around her neck and gave her a vigorous hug, while she trembled with emotion that involuntarily springs from the performance of a noble deed.

The artist stood aghast, stared wildly, and uttered a strong Saxon expletive that was neither ornamental or refined—an abrupt, emphatic oath,

very unbecoming in a gentlemanly artist ; but then there was a hundred dollars at stake, and even for so small a consideration many men and women, who claim to be the essence of social propriety, will throw open refinement's cage and let out the animals of their grosser nature. "'Tis true, 'tis pity, and pity 'tis 'tis true," but so long as money continues to be the key to ease, self-enjoyment and social position, just so long will its acquisition be sought, even though men dishonor themselves to secure it.

Relvason, when the negative first dropped from Vida's hand, sprang forward, a nervous twitching in his fingers, a ravenous look in his eyes, his face glowing with greedy avidity ; but, like the chameleon, his face assumed a different expression as he saw the little square of glass glance from the window sill ; the shaggy eyebrows dropped, the lips parted, the teeth glistened ferociously, while an ugly, livid color settled upon his now repulsive face. He stood glaring at Vida full ten seconds, like a caged tiger fresh from the jungles. It was well for Vida that her face was hidden in the bosom of her friend.

"Hell's furies !" he cried in a hollow, unnatural voice. The words were prolonged in the utterance, and were literally lacerated by the set teeth. He stood rigid as stone, his hands clenched, and his finger nails sunk deep into the palms. Had Vida at that instant been gifted with the nature of a man, retaining only woman's softness, tenderness and timidity, she probably would have fainted or cried for mercy ; but, in a manner peculiar to her sex, she soothed and mollified the angry man—not by soft words, but by looking through falling tears superlatively lovely. She smiled upon him so bewitchingly and looked up at him with moist eyes

so pleadingly, that his anger and rage gave way, but left behind a sullen and dissatisfied look, which could not easily be removed.

"I assure you, Mr. Relvason, I—I—" she said, in a soft beseeching voice; but her pure soul rebelled at the thought of prevarication, or by evasion to excuse a premeditated act; hence she hesitated, and would have been much confused had not another woman's wit rushed to her rescue.

"Of course, Mr. Relvason," said her companion, "it is quite annoying; but, then, you know it was an accident, and poor Vida should not be blamed for it," and she smiled sweetly, and spoke as only woman can speak.

Relvason was disarmed, and submitted to the prowess of his fair captors as gracefully as he could under the circumstances.

After his first surprise, the artist rushed down stairs, and now again appeared upon the scene, bearing in his hand a small jagged piece of glass.

"Well, how is it?" said Relvason, inquiringly.

"If you want a picture by which the original of this negative can be recognized at a glance, I believe we will still be able to manage it."

"Do you really think so?" said Relvason, with vehement eagerness, as he eyed the jagged fragment with a hungry look.

"If there is any defect in it, art and skill will be pitted against the defect, and I have no doubt of their success," responded the artist, as he held the little piece of glass up to the light and gazed through it with the air of a man that knew his business, and saw in perspective the shadowy form of a hundred dollars looming up beyond it.

"There will be nothing but the head and a small portion of the right shoulder," said the artist, "as you can see that the glass broke off sharply at the

intersection of the neck and left shoulder, traversely toward the right arm and directly below the cap of the shoulder."

"Yes, I see," replied Relvason, good humoredly, "but men are generally recognized by their faces, so I guess it will do," he added with a sinister chuckle.

Relvason was now in an approachable mood. The recovery of that fragment of sensitized glass, on which reverse lines of light and shade could be distinctly traced, dissipated the last vestige of his wrath. Noticing the change, Vida ventured to address him :

"But, Mr. Relvason, what does it all mean?" she said, a little timidly.

"To what do you refer?" he replied, in a cold, indifferent tone, which plainly indicated that the question was objectionable.

Vida recoiled slightly when she saw the effect her inquiry produced. She was, however, a brave, spirited, high-minded woman; she was conscious that the rights of a man who had imperiled his life at her request, and for her brother's sake, were being basely stolen, and, like the captured guns of an enemy, were to be used against him. These thoughts sank into her soul, spurred her resolution and firmness, and incited her combativeness sufficiently to overcome a natural timidity and hesitancy to concern herself with the affairs of others.

"I have reference to the unusual proceeding of taking a man's picture without his knowledge or consent," responded Vida, a trifle pertly, as she smiled saucily, intent on gilding the accusatory tone of her reply, and preventing a return of Relvason's ire. It had the desired effect, observing which, she continued :

"Is he a murderer, a thief, or an esteemed

friend or relative, with a prejudice against a camera, amounting to a conscript's fear of a shotted cannon, that you should deputize invisible actinism to accomplish a result otherwise unattainable?"

"Miss Geldamo, you are a natural actress," said Relvason, "Mark Antony's reference to Cæsar's murderers is scarcely more ironical than your question, but your divination is not so good; this man is simply a trade unionist."

"A 'trade unionist?'" repeated Vida, in a questioning, eager voice.

"Nothing more—enough that."

"Is it a very bad crime?" in an apparently anxious tone and expectant manner.

"Well, yes; it is a social crime, an attempt to overturn society and inaugurate a reign of anarchy."

"Why, I never heard of such a thing before; is it really so dreadful?"

"I will tell you all about it," said Relvason, "trade unionists are people—working people—who are foolish enough to think that they can reform or reorganize society upon a more equitable basis, as they term it; they want wealth and production more evenly distributed, and to accomplish these wild revolutionary schemes they have formed combinations, or unions as they call them; they are, in fact, communists."

"Is that all!" exclaimed Vida, with evident delight.

"Is it not sufficient?" retorted Relvason, with a frown. "Why," he resumed, in a condemnatory tone, "this rascal has had the unparalleled impudence to broach his devilish doctrines in my shops, and broached them so broadly that my men have become infected—why, they have actually organized one of these unions; but I'll crush them,"

the eyes disappeared, the teeth glared. "My power is already felt; this man cannot obtain an hour's work in the city; I will drive him out of it, and follow him beyond it!"

"If you have about driven him from the city, you should be satisfied," said Vida, in a pleasing tone.

"I'll drive him out of the trade, out of the country, off the earth unless he renounces these dangerous principles," he replied, in a blunt, savage voice.

Vida and her friend left a few moments later, and on their way home the morning's episode was the subject of conversation, in the course of which Vida said:

"You know there are two sides to every subject in the realm of discussion, and we should always look on the other side before rendering a conclusive and final opinion. I am convinced if all persons who, through personal interest or otherwise, engage in the discussion of questions of this or any other character, would only examine the merits of both sides, calmly and without the bias of preconceived prejudices, much of the violence of discussion and the rudeness of the language resulting therefrom would be avoided, and all parties would entertain a higher appreciation of the honesty and purity of motive actuating those on the other side. I do not think it is fair for us to condemn, or even judge harshly the designs of these men from the standpoint of our gilded convictions or theories of social life. We should examine their side of the picture with all its attendant miseries, poverty, unending toil, and ever present wretchedness, before we condemn acts that we would ourselves, under like circumstances, consider anything but criminal."

It is fair to presume that up to this moment, Vida Geldamo had no very serious thought of love in connection with Richard Arbyght; but, if like him, she had resolved not to fall in love, she acted very indiscreetly. She could not help thinking of him, nor did she try. She believed him to be brave, noble, generous, and good; still he was being relentlessly persecuted, and with remorseless, unnatural cruelty, his struggle for existence was being made more fierce and desperate. She could not prevent this injustice; and conscious inability to right what she knew to be a wrong gave birth to a purely womanly feeling—a tender pity; it was in permitting this interest and sympathy a lodgment in her heart that she acted indiscreetly, for when pity for a man enters the breast of a woman, it becomes rooted there until dislodged by an infinitely holier feeling—love. Pity is love's skirmisher, and as the main body is never far behind the skirmish line, neither is love far behind pity, and where the latter secures a footing, the former is pretty sure to complete the investment and capture the stronghold.

Arbyght, although not an expert in the language of signs, was conscious, however, that Vida Geldamo, by her looks and acts, wished to express to him her knowledge of his presence; the mute language seemed to further indicate that she had not forgotten him. While she remained at the window Richard was in heaven, but when she disappeared and did not return—he watched for her quite a while—it grew dark again; a cold, earthly gloom fell upon him, and with a leaden heart, he turned and walked slowly away. He had seen her; but to see her, to gaze upon her from afar off, oh! so far off, was all he dare permit himself to do; this, and nothing more.

As he moodily walked toward Soolfire cottage, his soul seemed to leave his body—all desire of life slowly died within him. Arbyght was in love. First it was a dream, now a reality. He knew it was not love perfected, because without mutuality or reciprocity love dies or becomes an infatuation. In dualism alone lies the sweet continuity of genuine, durable love. This Richard knew was not in the scope of probable possibilities, under the existing relations between him and Miss Geldamo ; he appreciated the mocking delusion of hugging a unitary love, but could he shake off the feeling ? Forty-eight hours' experience convinced him that he could not ; it came upon him independent of rational control ; it seemed a fatalism that laughed at and annihilated free will ; and if there is any power capable of separating the soul from a body that lives and breathes, it is an unfathomable, immeasurable love, coupled with the consciousness that it can not be reciprocated, nor enjoyed if it were. In this state of mind Arbyght reached the cottage, but before he met Bertha he made a powerful effort to recover from his despondent, gloomy mood.

He failed miserably.

Bertha noticed his preoccupied manner, and, filled with sympathy, she sought by cautious inquiries to ascertain what it was that caused him such evident anxiety.

But Richard's answers were evasive, non-committal, and finally he turned the conversation by telling her of his intention to leave the city.

This led to a long and earnest talk ; Bertha was getting used to her new name, and was not displeased with it, although she said that dropping " Grace " seemed like losing a very dear and very old friend. Still she was pleased with the idea that

nothing of her old life would remain, that no magic spell of name would ever awaken even the slightest memory of the past.

"This sweet name will be the door that will close the tomb in which lies the past of my young life," she said in a low, sad voice, as some sweet thoughts of days gone by rose up before her. She was reconciled to Richard's departure from the city by a promise that he would soon send for her, and in some other city and among new scenes they could begin a new life. While they were busy talking and planning like young lovers, the distant, muffled sound of carriage wheels in rapid motion on the unpaved street reached their ears. Bertha listened; the sound came nearer and grew louder, then grew faint—fainter, then ceased; the carriage had stopped; Bertha became agitated; a sound, half snort, half neigh—Bertha grasped her brother's arm, shook and trembled like a reed in the wind; above each cheek a fiery red spot glowed in a face as white as virgin snow; her lips parted, and a sound that seemed born in the air resolved itself into—"Jespra." The gate opened, a man's step was heard on the walk; the blushes faded from Bertha's face, and left it as pale and colorless as the waning moon after sunrise; the door opened, and Mrs. Soolfire ushered Paul Geldamo into the room.

"Found at last!" he exclaimed, in a joyous tone, accompanied by a bright, winning smile, that gleamed in his blue eyes, and glorified his handsome face.

Bertha still held her brother by the arm, but she stood gracefully firm, with a dignified and majestic loftiness of mien and stately grandeur that might be termed Cleopatrian. She bowed with easy grace, but her face remained as calmly impassive as a mar-

ble Madonna ; and yet she loved this man with a love as silently pure as the dew of heaven ; with a love that knew no depths, no end. Her individuality was not affected by the change in her social condition, except that it was idealized and purified ; she was too unselfish to expect Paul to keep his plighted word, knowing, as she did, that he would incur the odium and scorn of the gold-worshippers, and the bitter wrath of one of their high priests—his father—by so doing. True love cares not for self ; the love of a child for a toy seen in a shop window is the love of many—the love of possession ; but it is not real love. Bertha could not give her love to Paul and give him trials and troubles. But Paul was not so ethereal in his views. He came to comfort her, and to assure her that no change in her social status, no vicissitudes of life or mutations of time could affect his devotion ; in fact, the new order of things rather pleased him as it gave him an opportunity of proving the sincerity of his love ; but when he saw the change had extended to Bertha's individuality, a great cloud of grief fell upon his soul, and, dropping into a chair, he covered his face with his hands, and merely said :

“ Oh, Grace ! has it come to this ? ”

But the words seemed torn, wrenched from a bleeding heart. They had such an effect upon Richard that he left the room at once. She tried to detain him, but he said, in a very emphatic whisper :

“ Sister, you are cruel ! ” as he tore himself away. Alone.

In Cupid's syntax duality is always in the singular number, hence alone in this case is not misapplied. In the arithmetic of love, one and one make only one.

A long silence—the seconds of love are either evanescently short or interminably long. In this instance they were long. A plain gold ring on the little finger of Paul's left hand broke the spell. It was a present from Bertha, innocently given, but now it did yeoman service; it mutely appealed to the statuesque girl; it silently told its tale of constancy and love; it brought tears to her eyes and a sobbing "Paul" to her lips; it dissolved her passive rigidity, and a weak, trembling girl fell into the arms of a trembling man.

The invincible winged god had triumphed again.

The interview between the lovers was a long, and in some respects, an unhappy one. Paul begged, protested and pleaded, but Bertha was inexorable and unyielding in insisting that he should not see her again for a year; and if at the end of that time his love remained unchanged, she would become his wife, come what might, and, if necessary, work and toil for him, as he had sworn to work and toil for her.

Richard's hour for departure had arrived, and he bade his sister an affectionate adieu. At the gate he found Paul, of whom he wished also to take leave, but the latter insisted on driving him to the depot. Richard not being quite ready to start, Paul drove him to Madam Yudall's, where he bade him a regretful and sorrowful good-by.

"Oh, by the way," asked Paul, turning back as he was about to leave, "have you any relatives in this part of the country?"

Richard said he thought not; his grandfather and grandmother had lived in the city and had died there; but, although he had diligently inquired and searched, he could not discover their graves or any trace of their only daughter, his father's sister.

He was unable to say whether she was dead or not ; but he feared such was the case, since nothing could be ascertained concerning her.

Paul was gone. The force of his inquiry did not occur to Richard for some time afterward. His arrangements were completed by writing a letter to the union.

Across the Illinois prairie that night, cleaving the thick gloom, as cleaves the air the eagle descending upon its prey, shot a thing of life, yet inanimate, leaving a long train of fire and smoke in its wake—a falling star skimming the horizontal earth ; carried along in the thundering embrace of this obedient but Jovian-powered child of labor, was one of labor's noblest sons ; the creator fleeing from the creature, the parent, hounded and driven off the premises by the unnatural child.

CHAPTER XXV.

THE POWER OF MONEY.

One morning, two or three days after Richard's departure from the city, three workmen entered Relvason's office. Workmen? Yes. There is that on the face of the hard-worked which tells its tale of toil ; a tongueless but subtle revelation that speaks to the heart ; it is a peculiar expression, a blending of youth and age—a young-old look, seen only on the faces of those who labor ten hours or more per day ; it is a look that tells of undue physical exertion, overwrought muscle and lack of rest ; it is the slow, sluggish, heavy expression, that

burdensome fatigue ever stamps on the face of men, women and children. Any person who labors ten hours per day at hard work, has the word "toil" written upon his forehead as plainly as the number or mark on the beast of the apocalypse, so plainly that it could be read were the man clad in the royal garments of a king. The fictitious accessories of rags, or poverty-stricken hovels, are not needed here; every lineament of the face tells its tale of human wretchedness and woe. How many men daily walk our streets who are to the artist's eye a truer, better picture of modern life than the best works of Titian, Rubens and Vandyke were of the life of their times? And, again, how many roam through our streets *a la* Geldamo, who typify in themselves a similitude of the soft effeminacy that sapped the foundations of historic Rome?

"Mr. Relvason, we are a committee appointed by the union to respectfully lay before you and the other employers a grievance to which that body has, in justice to itself, deemed it necessary to call your attention," said Henry Trustgood, in behalf of himself and John McFlinn and Oscar Wood, the balance of the committee.

"You are what?" queried Relvason, with rising ire, and in a sharp, peremptory voice.

"A committee, sir," replied Trustgood, quietly, but firmly.

"And by what authority?" asked Relvason, in his usual sneering tone.

"The union," responded Trustgood.

"Don't know such a party," he replied, as he turned to his desk with a rudeness, unbecoming the gentleman Mr. Relvason was credited with being in social circles.

The committee stared at each other. This was a rebuff they had not expected, and for a moment

they stood in embarrassed and confused silence, not knowing what to say or do. They saw, however, that there was nothing left them but to go, and go they did. They had not gone far, however, before Spindle hailed them. They returned to the office, when Relvason said, with a savage sneer :

“ Men, I will give you some advice ; the sooner you emigrate, the better for yourselves ; you are not wanted in this city,” and again he turned to his desk with vulgar abruptness.

“ Mr. Relvason,” said McFlinn, slowly and deliberately, “ we are free agents, and should we ever conclude to leave this city, we trust it will not be necessary to ask either your advice or your consent.”

Before Relvason's wrath had time to explode the committee left. They visited the other establishments, but in every instance, except one, they were treated in the same manner. The exception was an employer who seemed to remember that a man should be a gentleman under all circumstances and upon all occasions. He said to them :

“ Boys, if you were working in my shops I would be glad to talk with you as men, not as a committee. We also have organized a union, and this matter has been fully discussed. We do not think it wise to treat with our men through an organization. We are willing to treat with them as employés ; to do otherwise would be to recognize a vicious principle—the right of the union to participate in the management of our private affairs.” The committee replied that the reason given involved a distinction without a difference ; that it was, outside of the principle at issue, simply a matter of convenience ; that five hundred men calling upon an employer to state a grievance could not present their views in as orderly, or in

as intelligent a manner as a committee, chosen with especial reference to the object in view ; and that the true reason why the employers refused to receive the committee was the fear that such action would be a recognition of the men's right to organize.

The next day the men quietly left the shops, and either remained at home or sought work elsewhere. Three days went by ; no change. Most of the men were already engaged in such work as presented itself. The employers became uneasy. The busy season was already upon them and orders were pressing. They sought some of the men, but their every question was answered : " See the committee ; we have no jurisdiction in the matter."

One easy-going man, who it was thought could be weaned from duty, replied to a long string of questions in a way that astonished his logical reasoners and would-be capturers.

" We do not deny your right to refuse to treat with our committee. That is undoubtedly your privilege," he said ; " but," he continued, " we have a natural and legal right to combine and appoint that committee, and if we choose to treat only through such a committee, that is our privilege. We deny you no right legitimately yours ; we simply insist upon rights legitimately ours. It is an employer's unquestioned province to say how much he shall give for labor, but it is also labor's undisputed right to say for how much it shall be sold. Let us illustrate. There is a question of dispute between two powers, for instance, on a point of international law. Now, either nation has a right to appoint a commission to confer with the other on the point in dispute, but neither is bound to recognize or treat with the commission so appointed. Still, they do so, because it is wise international policy ; because civilization and

enlightenment are opposed to war and bloodshed ; and, although you are not compelled to treat with our committee, that does not invalidate our right to appoint the committee, and to treat with you only through such committee ; and do you not think it would be better to recognize in us a *de facto* body with which to treat than to continue this commercial war?"

The employers thought so finally, and resolved to see the committee and learn the nature of the grievance of which the men complained.

Weekly cash payments and the right to trade where they pleased was the request of the men.

It was flatly and insultingly refused, and the industrial war continued.

The men, conscious of their right to control their own acts and persons in matters not unlawful, refused to work, except on conditions that recognized their right to a voice in determining the value of their labor, the right to that value when earned, and the right to spend it when and where they deemed best. They at the same time conceded to the employers the unrestrained right to obtain other hands should they choose to do so. By liberal advertising, and by offering better wages than they had been paying, the employers attempted to fill their shops with new men, but failed signally.

A lull now occurred in the strife—an ominous calm. Three days of masterly inactivity, and the iron hand of greed made itself felt. Every man who had left the shops, and who had secured other work, some from the city, others from private corporations, were summarily discharged without warning or explanation. How was it accomplished? Simply enough. A resolution by the Board of Trade, of which many of the employers were members, and some manipulatory ring shuf-

fling, by a corrupt, mercenary city council, of which Relvason was a member, did the business, and did it effectually. Had this result been the effect of an invocation to the Prince of Darkness by a convocation of evil spirits, it could not appear in the eyes of just men more inhuman or merciless ; or had it been the result of an incantation of witchcraft, its effect could not more thoroughly dishearten the men. The second week of the difficulty ended gloomily for the cause of right.

The morning after his departure from Chicago, Richard found himself in the flourishing city of Milwaukee. He secured work readily, and was fully settled in the afternoon. He then remembered that he had received some letters as he was leaving Chicago which he had forgotten to read. Among them was one that affected him visibly as soon as he saw the signature. With a beating heart and a glowing face he read :

DEAR SIR : *Your note reached me a few moments ago. I need not attempt to describe my astonishment. I was filled with amazement, and I might add delight. Not alone do I rejoice to learn that my dearest and best friend has found a brother, but that she has found one so eminently worthy of her, and found him at a time when she most needed fraternal protection. I must also say that I was much pained by your ungenerous reference to the difference in our social positions. In all the essential elements of true greatness, your sister is my superior, and I am selfish enough to desire a continuance of our former friendship. Please inform me where and when I can see her, and greatly oblige,*

"Yours sincerely, VIDA GELDAMO.

"P. S.—I am a prophetess. You are going to leave the city. Perhaps 'tis well, but 'twere better

to conciliate an enemy, or, therein failing, fight him in his own territory.
V. G."

As minute particles of iron fly, adhere and cling to a magnet, so every impulse of Richard's soul flew to and centered in this note. He pored over it, read it a dozen times, kissed it rapturously, read it over again, fixed each word, and the very shade and turn of the letters indelibly in his mind, and the more he read and kissed it, the higher in his estimation rose the writer. She was all goodness, all loveliness—an angel.

Goethe, in his autobiography, says that the first propensity to love in an uncorrupted youth takes altogether a spiritual direction. It was so with Richard. He could see nothing but beauty and goodness in her he loved ; but he paid dearly for indulging in these joyous transports, and the depth of his pain was in exact proportion to the height of his ecstatic flight. One moment in heaven would add infinite tortures—the pain of loss—to the damned soul, and when the utter hopelessness of his passion swept across the mind of Richard Arbyght his soul was racked with a greater pain than he ever knew.

As he lay in a deep slumber that night, his wakeful soul sought its affinity. The man traversed dreamland without regard to time, speed, or distance. He finally reached the center of a boundless plain, and from where he stood the earth and sky seemed, in the distance, to meet in a coronal line, broken only in the East, where loomed a vast mountain range, surpassing anything seen on earth, its great curvilinear, isolated peaks towering precipitously, cast long lines of shadows across the plain, through which swiftly ran a deep, broad river, cutting it into two unequal divisions. The

plain on both sides of the river was inhabited, but strange to say, the smaller division was densely populated with suffering, starving mortals, while in the larger division there were comparatively few people, who seemed to enjoy a luxurious life in a land of oriental splendor and enchanted ease. Richard walked down to the river's edge and looked across. The first object that riveted his attention was Vida Geldamo, who seemed to be earnestly looking toward the side on which he stood. An uncontrollable desire to cross the dark river now took possession of him, but to attempt it was death; the river was wide, the current swift, almost a rapid. There was a boat that plied regularly between the two shores, but he was told that to secure passage across he must have the usual passport—gold. Very few went over, and nearly as many came back, but those that returned had no choice in the matter. How to cross the river was a problem that perplexed his mind. Passport he did not have and could not obtain, although he was told it mattered not how it was procured, whether stolen, or fished from the feculence of fraud and wrong, or even secured at the expense of a reeking holocaust of blood; all that was required, was that it should be solid, real gold and of sufficient weight. But he had no gold, nor would he steal nor murder to get it; hence he was compelled to sorrowfully abandon the thought of crossing. A closer observation showed that the river was many feet below the level of the plain, and from stratifications noticeable on the descending bank, Richard concluded that at one time the river had been much wider and deeper than at present, and that it was evidently slowly drying up. He wandered far up the bank, thinking that, like all rivers, it would grow narrower toward its source, and that, perhaps, a

fordable point might be reached. But he was disappointed ; it preserved a uniform width and swift-ness at every point he approached ; still he perseveringly pursued his course toward the head, if head this strange river had. The shadows of the sugar-loaf mountains grew broader and darker as he neared them. He soon reached their base, and passing through a deep, dark canyon, he reached an open space and beheld a spectacle that startled him. The sight presented to his astonished vision was unspeakably, incomprehensibly grand, inspiring awe, rather than admiration. Two towering chains of ice mountains, whose peaks were swathed in eternal snow, abruptly terminated in the open space some ninety miles apart, and extending back convergently until they met about ninety miles from the opening. These mountain chains were more than five miles high, and the V-like valley they formed was once a vast field or block of ice over four miles thick—the concreted accumulations of centuries. It was the ice of ignorance and barbarism ; but a mighty orb glowing in the western heavens, called the sun of education, had made fearful inroads into this vast, icy field. For many years its steady, perpetual rays of effulgent heat had shone upon the congealed mass with dissolving effect. The heat of education's sun was growing stronger and stronger, and the ice was melting away more and more rapidly ; the stamp of inevitable dissolution was upon it ; great fissures were everywhere discernible ; and this was the head, the source of the river of Distinction, that by its dividing line made two worlds of one. Streams, creeks, and rivulets, created by the dissolving ice, fed the river that the dreamer essayed in vain to cross. He now retraced his steps, returning through the canyon, passing through the shadows

of the tall, curvilinear mountains, back into the wide, open plain. But a great change had taken place in the river during his absence; it was almost dry. The boat that monopolized and held the exclusive right to cross and recross its dark, swift-flowing current was grounded and deserted. The dreamer again looked across the now nearly empty channel, and again he saw Vida Geldamo standing where he first beheld her; but as he looked she advanced toward him; filled with a great joy, he started to meet her; nearer and nearer they came; more and more distinct grew the features of each, and in the middle of the dry channel they fell into each other's arms in a burst of mutual rapture. The temporary torpidity of the sleeper's senses began to give way; the faculties of the mind gradually emerged from a quiescent state, his slumberous eyes slowly opened, and, in wakeful moments, the sad conviction burst upon him that his blissful vision was only a dream.

CHAPTER XXVI.

ACCEPTS HER ADVICE.

"You are from Chicago, I believe?" Arbyght's new employer remarked, in a casual way, one day, as they met in the yard.

"I am," said Richard, quietly.

"Why did you leave there?" in an impertinent tone.

"Why?"

"Yes."

“To avoid unjust persecution.”

“Humph,” grunted the employer ; then, fumbling in a side-pocket of his coat, he drew out a package of letters, from one of which he took and handed to Arbyght an oblong piece of stiff cardboard, on which was photographed this picture :



"Do you recognize it?" he asked, with a malicious grin, as he observed Arbyght's perplexity and astonishment.

"Yes, I recognize it; but how or by what right it was taken is a puzzle that I can not comprehend; can you?"

"How it was taken or by what right are questions that do not concern me," responded the employer.

"Well, perhaps you would not be averse to disclosing from whom you received it?" said Richard.

"It came from Chicago."

"Oh!" It was clear to Richard now.

"Yes," continued the scanctimonious Sanderson Cairns, "and I think you had better go back and make a more commendable record before you again attempt to impose upon us. We want no agitators here. If my men dare to organize I will discharge every man of them and fill their places with Chinese."

Richard was quite angry, but he restrained himself, being determined not to betray any visible sign of the indignation that drove the blood hotly through his veins.

"Why don't you procure these Chinese now?" asked Richard, sarcastically.

Cairns was cornered, but endeavored to extricate himself by saying:

"You see, most of the men who work for me are of my own nationality; hence, I feel for them, and do not wish to see them suffer from lack of employment; although I am sure I could get my work done much cheaper by Chinese."

"Oh! I see," responded Richard, "not the force of your reason, but the force of your motive; your men are allied to you by national ties; oh,

yes ! and for that reason you imagine you have an unquestionable right to fleece them. Yours is the sympathy of the farmer for the sheep before he shears them, or the housewife for her geese before she plucks them. Now sir, give me my time ; labor is a commodity that should never beg for a market," and he tore the photograph into a dozen pieces, and threw them upon the ground.

Richard Arbyght left Milwaukee and went to Peoria, Illinois, but could obtain no work. Whenever he entered a shop he was at once recognized, and very frequently insulted. It would be useless to record the state of his mind during these days of far-reaching persecution. At times he gave himself up to the bitterest emotions of hate ; then Vida Geldamo entered his soul and left no room for hate. One employer sympathized with him, and said he would employ him but for the rest—he feared the other employers would prejudice the minds of consumers and leave him without a market. From this man Richard learned that Relvason had sent nearly every employer of note in the West a printed letter in which he was represented as a man to be feared, that he was the paid agent of some secret revolutionary league, the object of which was to overturn the government, and rob and murder the moneyed men of the country. Accompanying each letter was a copy of the above photograph.

" 'Twere better to conciliate an enemy, or, therein failing, fight him in his own territory." These words recurred to the hounded son of toil with greater force every day, until he finally resolved to follow Vida's advice and return to Chicago.

Forty-two miles northwest of that city, in a gently-rolling prairie country, on the banks of the Fox river, is located the beautiful and thriv-

ing town of Elgin, one of the pleasantest places in all the surrounding country. When it was reached by the Chicago bound train, on which Richard Arbyght was journeying to the enemies' territory, a poor woman, worn out by the fatigue of traveling and the care of two small children, asked Richard if he would be kind enough to bring her a cup of warm coffee. He answered that he would be only too glad to be of service to her. The coffee was procured, but while Richard was paying for it at the restaurant counter the train sped out of the depot and left him behind.

The next train was not due for several hours. If there is any one thing that will make a man restless and uneasy, it is waiting for a train at a depot. Richard found it so, and, to banish the *ennui* that oppressed him, he took a stroll through the town and beyond its suburbs.

The autumn sun was about half an hour high, the face of the declining day was fanned by the soft winds of the Indian summer; the sky was clear above but merged into a purplish haziness at the horizon, where it seemed to blend with the rolling prairie. Richard had reached the open country, and saw groves and snow-white cottages environed with clustering trees on every side. While he stood and gazed entranced on nature's loveliness, contemplating the approaching demise of sere and yellow autumn, he was awakened from his reverie by a dull, rumbling sound as of muffled thunder dancing in the air; looking toward the south, he saw approaching the train from Chicago. On it came with thundering force and lightning speed; on it came like some fabled messenger of the gods; now it shot 'round a sharp curve like a bolt from heaven and came fully into view, and then there issued from the iron lungs of the monster a blue

vapory breath, followed by an appalling, unearthly screech.

A violent plunging and prancing of horses, mingled with cries of distress, now claimed Richard's attention, and glancing down the road leading to the town he saw two ladies mounted on blooded horses that were pawing the ground, and champing, prancing, and rearing fearfully. The train swept by with a whirling rush and roar. In passing, the same appalling, unearthly screech again rent the air; the spirited animals took fright and dashed madly up the road; Richard planted himself at one side of the track and as they dashed by he sprang and caught the nearest horse by the bit, and after a sharp struggle brought him to a halt. The lady, a tall, graceful woman, with large gray eyes, wavy brown hair, and a fair complexion, dismounted hurriedly and with clasped hands and tremulous accents said:

"For God's sake, save my cousin!"

Quick as thought Richard drew his knife, cut the girths, jerked off the saddle, and, springing upon the horse, gave chase to the flying steed and soon gained upon him; but the fair rider, although she evidently had no control over the fright-maddened animal, did not appear to be at all alarmed. A glossy brown curl fluttered under her riding-hat like the streamer on a topmast, and she sat in her saddle with grace and ease. Suddenly the frightened horse, to evade a crowd of excited men and boys that had gathered on the road, leaped a low fence and dashed across an open field toward a thickly-wooded grove. Rapidly noting the danger that now threatened the fair rider, Richard caused his horse to leap the same fence a few rods back, and, taking an oblique course, sought to head off the runaway horse, the rider of which had

now become thoroughly frightened as she neared the grove, for she knew that if her horse rushed in among the trees it would be a ride to death. She saw the near approach of help, but she was now very close to the grove. She leaned forward in her saddle, closed her lips tightly, and prepared for the worst.

Richard drove the heels of his boots into the flanks of his horse, and the animal, responding with a magnificent spurt, brought him to the side of the now almost inanimate woman. Calling on her to disengage her feet from the stirrups, he threw his right arm around her and lifted her from the saddle just as they reached the edge of the grove, and a sudden jerk with his left hand reined the now doubly-laden beast completely around.

The fair rider had fainted. Richard dismounted at once and laid her gently down, tied his horse to a young sapling, and proceeded to restore his unconscious charge. To give her air he threw back her vail, which had fallen over her face; but he drew back with a start. It was Vida Geldamo that lay pale and motionless before him. He uttered a little cry of mingled love and terror, half joy, half sorrow. He took her cold, bloodless, tiny hands between his warm palms, pressed them tenderly, kissed them with soft violence, his heart fluttering in his breast like a wounded bird the while. He dropped the hands and darted off in search of water, found none; darted back again, took her hands again, wet them with his tears, rained upon them soul-ravishing kisses, and by the magnetism of his love electrified her into sensibility.

She opened her eyes slightly, saw who was bending over her, opened them very wide, closed

them again, perhaps to think; or perhaps his love and devotion was so genuine, so real, so unlike anything she had ever dreamed of, that she was rather pleased than otherwise, and did not wish to rudely break the spell. A rosy flush stole over her neck and face, as she murmured softly:

“Oh! Mr. Arbyght!”

He was at her side in a twinkling, assisted her to sit up, and spoke so gently that she soon grew out of the novelty and strangeness of the occurrence and laughed gaily; but, glancing furtively at Richard, she noticed his tear-stained cheeks, and then her own eyes filled, and she turned away her head and both were silent.

Recovering herself, Vida turned to Richard, and, putting out her hand, said, with soft, lingering accent:

“I am so glad it was you,” but, fearing she had said too much, she continued, “you will take me home now?”

Some boys, who had been nutting in the grove, saw the riderless horse, caught him, and appeared at this moment leading him out of the grove. Richard hailed the boys and secured the horse, which was now quite tame and submissive. He assisted Vida to mount, and in silence they started for the town—Richard walking and leading the horse with which he overtook her. After a while, Vida said, in a tone of surprise rather than inquiry:

“What strange fatality brought you here?”

“Your advice,” he replied.

“My advice?”

“Yes; I am going back to fight the enemy in his own territory.”

Vida hung her head, and another silence ensued.

"You have relations here, I presume?" said Richard, after the lapse of several minutes.

"An aunt-in-law and cousin," replied Vida.

Another silence. Vida was castle building; Richard was grave digging. They met the cousin near the point where Arbyght had jumped the fence. An introduction followed. Miss Saunders seemed puzzled. Vida noticed her inquiring look, and said, by way of answer:

"Mr. Arbyght and I have met before. He is an esteemed friend."

This remark did not, in itself, indicate much, but Vida managed to throw into it so much profound thankfulness, and so much respect that Richard was in Danté's seventh heaven at once. It was quite dark when Mrs. Saunders' house was reached. A servant came out and took charge of the horses, and Miss Saunders invited Richard to remain over night, as he had again missed the train for Chicago. He declined—Vida insisted. He said, that sooner than trespass on her aunt's hospitality he would prefer to remain at a hotel, but in that, to tell the truth, his lips gave the lie to his heart. Vida would not accept a refusal; she read the man. It is woman's specialty to read men, and it is astonishing to note the proficiency which some of them display in this branch of their education.

Her pleading prevailed. Richard accepted the invitation and entered the house. He was shown into a large, brilliantly-lighted room. A woman, about forty years of age, arose as he entered, and looked straight at him as the light shone full on his face, and, before Vida or her cousin could introduce him, she advanced and said eagerly:

"Surely your name is Arbyght?"

Richard looked at her keenly, noted the regular

features, the dark, flashing eyes, and defiant-looking mouth, and replied promptly :

“And surely you are my Aunt Kate, my father’s sister.”

The recognition was mutual ; the resemblance between them was marked and striking ; they would pass for mother and son any where.

Richard remained two days, and was treated like a prince. When he departed a gloom fell upon the whole household, and upon no one was the effect more noticeable than upon Vida. Time glided quickly by while he was present, it now dragged tediously. This may have been because Vida had lost her vivacity. He left in the morning—she did not play or sing the remainder of the day. The next day she went to the piano, but her touch awakened only the most plaintive and pathetic airs, and her voice was lower and softer than before ; she avoided, as much as possible, any reference to Richard. Was she in love ? She dared not ask herself the question.

When Arbyght reached Chicago the men were completely demoralized, and were returning to work every day, but the leader’s presence caused a reaction : a large meeting was held, the situation was discussed, new plans were laid, and the men became more determined and enthusiastic than ever. The next day all those who had returned to work again left the shops.

The employers were now confused, and offered to compromise by giving half cash and substituting the pass-book system for the order system. To this cunning proposition the committee answered :

“Under the present system we are very poorly paid, and lose over fifteen per cent. of our earnings by not being paid in cash ; and the pass-book sys-

tem is even worse than the order-system, since there would be no limit to our credit except the amount of our weekly wages, and with so many wants staring us in the face cash payments would be very uncertain, if not absolutely wanting, if stores were thrown open for general purchase; hence, we are compelled to decline the proposition."

The employers yielded to the demand of the union two days afterward.

About a week after this settlement, McFlinn, Trustgood and Wood were discharged upon trivial pretexts.

CHAPTER XXVII.

THE STRUGGLE FOR EXISTENCE.

A few days after Arbyght's return to Chicago Mr. Allsound waited upon him and offered him a clerkship in his store. Richard accepted the situation gratefully, and thanked Allsound for the interest he manifested in his welfare. The thanks were misdirected; Paul Geldamo was entitled to them. Mr. Allsound's motives were selfish. He thought that by complying with Paul's request his interest would be advanced in another direction.

Bertha received a letter from her new-found aunt and cousin urging and begging her to visit them. She finally complied. Richard also urged her to accept the invitation, and was glad that she had

left the city, as he expected trouble and was especially anxious that his sister should be spared the pain and annoyance his difficulties would cause her.

In his new vocation, after a short initiation, Richard got along charmingly. It was for this man that Lionel Trueson worked, and the company and presence of the lad served to make the new clerk feel more at home. After he had been in Allsound's employ about two weeks an event transpired that was plainly stamped with the imprint of the Leviathan's tooth.

Many of the Relvason syndicate charged the guiding spirit with overzealousness, and claimed that had Arbyght been permitted to secure work in outside towns, he would, in all probability, have remained away, and confusion and defeat would not have come upon them. These remarks drove Relvason into such a frenzy that his soul was gnawed by the sharp fangs of bitter rage. The humiliation of defeat, the abasement of his domineering pride, and, worse than all, the loss of money, was a more excruciating torture than would be the excoriation of his body. Still he smiled, and none would suppose that the sinisterly-calm face of the man, "essentially mad, without seeming so," was the index to a soul devouring itself with hate intensified.

Arbyght beware! "the Philistines are upon thee!"

An agent was sent to Allsound with discretionary power. He sounded the merchant on identity of interests; then he pleaded; next he attempted to bribe. Allsound wished to discharge Richard. He hated him because he did what he could not, dared not attempt—saved Paul Geldamo's life, and in her presence, too. He was jealous of Richard's

manhood ; hence, he had no love for him. But to discharge Arbyght he feared would displease Vida Geldamo, and he was too shrewd to be caught with chaff. Her hand, commercially speaking, was worth a million dollars, and it was from a commercial standpoint Allsound regarded her and wooed her. He was incapable of human or platonic love, not possessing manhood enough for the former nor soul enough for the latter. He loved and courted her father's gold, and that was more than the syndicate could offer.

The Leviathan was again foiled, but not appeased.

Vida Geldamo returned to Chicago. The next evening Allsound and Estella Relvason, accompanied by Spindle, called upon her. They found her in raptures over country air, boundless room, broad fields, warm-hearted, generous people, and the innumerable other attractions unknown to city life. Still, there was in her manner a subdued melancholy that contrasted strangely with her former sprightliness. While they were still discussing the country, Paul Geldamo and Richard Arbyght entered the room unannounced. Vida's face brightened, and then grew sad. Joy and sorrow, laughter and tears seem to be very closely allied.

Spindle stared and nodded at Richard ; Allsound recognized him with the lofty air of a man of conscious distinction and superiority. Miss Relvason was introduced and bowed coldly, stiffly, haughtily. Richard bowed to each in an easy manner, but with deigned civility, while a satirical smile danced around his eyes and mouth. Vida's quick eye—the eye of love—noticed the lurking disdain and repressed resentment in his face, and, though the cause of it irritated her, she did not choose to show

that she cared. Still, she was revenged. She gave her hand to Richard, and showed, by her smile and kind words, that she was pleased to see him ; and, to cap the climax of his and her triumph, she called him cousin.

All this fencing with voice and action was not only genuine, it was designed with wondrous nicety to soften Richard and force the rest of the company to treat him at least with the forms of respect and deference. Nor did it wholly fail ; but when he was called cousin, they stared and gaped in astonishment. Vida noticed their evident bewilderment and explained, and when she ceased the company were sufficiently *en report* to converse smoothly.

Richard was not quite at his ease, but Vida brought to bear all her woman's wit and tact to drive away his constraint ; and yielding to her charming influence, his reserve disappeared and he joined in the conversation and held his own. He was not an adept in small talk, and his remarks did not possess that complete, refined, complimentary obsequiousness observable in *elite* society, but though they were sometimes quaint, they were at all times sententious, vigorous, and to the point ; and they had a charm for Vida because she knew that they were the sentiments of an earnest, manly man.

"Mr. Arbyght, permit me to ask how the union is getting along?" said Spindle, placing an insinuating, deprecating emphasis on the word union.

"It lives and thrives," replied Richard, with slight emphasis on the word lives, partly in allusion to the abortive attempt to destroy it.

Spindle felt the force of the rejoinder and did not venture on that ground again.

"Do you sing, Mr. Arbyght?" asked Miss Relvason, with the air of an artiste.

Vida colored perceptibly and bit her lips sharply.

"I sometimes sing," said Richard, quietly, and then added with a twinkle in his eye, "My voice has considerable compass and tone, but is unfortunately hampered by a serious drawback." Allsound winced.

"And pray, what may that be, if it is not impertinent to ask?"

"Why," Richard replied, "the compass of my voice is such that it invariably fills the room, but the drawback is that it invariably empties it."

Vida smiled approvingly, the others laughed. Miss Relvason then went to the piano and dashed off a sparkling air from Verdi's "*Rigoletto*," and then tried to interpret a passage in Gounod's "*Faust*." This was Greek to Richard, and it is more than likely it was also Greek to the performer.

Vida followed with some sprightly national airs, and the company were in ecstasies. The music of the old masters may do well enough for concerts and operas, where it is the thing to feel entranced and applaud what you do not understand, but for the drawing-room, the sweet, simple airs of our childhood are far more acceptable.

Richard was then asked to sing by Miss Relvason, Allsound, and Spindle. They asked him to humble him, because they thought he could not sing. He declined demurely, but looked pleadingly at Vida.

"I will play the accompaniment for you," she said, interpreting his look.

"Then I will sing."

He went to the piano, picked up the music,

and made a selection. Vida looked at him reprovingly, and said softly :

“Not that.”

“That or nothing,” he replied, in a low but decided tone, but added more softly and in a voice that quivered, “if you please.”

Vida struck the sentient keys, and in a clear, soft voice Richard sang :

“I’d offer thee this hand of mine
If I could love thee less ;
But hearts as warm, as pure as thine,
Should never know distress.
My fortune ’tis too hard for thee,
’Twould chill thy dearest joy.
I’d rather weep to see thee free
Than win thee to destroy.”

The music ceased.

“I do not like the song,” pleaded Vida in a husky voice, her eyes moist with tears. “Its pathos always makes me feel sad,” she added in a clearer tone.

Allsound coincided. He felt annoyed, and could not help showing it.

Vida’s face turned quite red, but she made no reply. A few moments later the company departed.

The next morning Spindle called upon Allsound before the latter had arisen. He was, by request, shown into Allsound’s room.

“Well, what do you think of last night’s episode?” said Spindle, with malicious sarcasm.

“I hardly know what to think,” said the other, disconsolately.

“This mudsill is evidently in the way,” continued Spindle, in a tone of mock sympathy.

“Do you think he has the impudence——

“There! there! I know him; don’t you trouble

yourself about his impudence. You will find him well up in that commodity," tauntingly interrupted Spindle.

"I'll discharge him this very day," roared Allsound.

"That won't help your case," nonchalantly remarked his visitor.

"Why not?" The volume of voice was increasing.

"How will the matter be bettered so long as he remains in the city?" said Spindle with quiet but provoking bitterness.

Hell was now raging in the breast of Allsound.

"What can I do?" he asked, desperately.

Spindle went close to him, brought his eyes out of their cave-like recesses, and, looking knowingly into Allsound's face, said, or rather hissed in his ear:

"He must be disgraced and driven from the city!"

Before Allsound could rightly comprehend the force of these words Spindle was gone.

Going down to his store that morning Allsound thought long and hard. Jealousy, like a prompting demon, was urging and goading him to desperation. In turning a corner, he observed a locksmith's sign; he paused, glanced around, then hurried on. "A thief doth fear each bush an officer." Allsound was in his heart at that moment a criminal. In his store there were two safes, an old-fashioned one, with an ordinary key, and a modern one, with a combination lock. Upon reaching the store, he took the key of the old safe out of the drawer, and placing it in his pocket, went back to the locksmith's shop, whose sign he had noticed on his way to the store, and ordered a duplicate key. The next morning he called at

the shop and secured the keys. On one side of the store a black walnut partition, some seven feet high and fifteen feet from the wall, extended back thirty feet from the large front window, enclosing a space, the upper end of which was occupied by the book-keeper, and the opposite end by desks for general business. In this place the clerks usually hung their overcoats. Allsound entered quietly, spoke to the book-keeper, turned and passed into the store, and as he glided out in a stealthy manner, he adroitly slipped the duplicate key into the inside pocket of Arbyght's overcoat. He left the store shortly afterward, and in an hour returned, accompanied by Sergeant Soolfire.

The book-keeper and clerks were called together, and the officer gave each one as he appeared a sharp, crucial look.

"Are there any more?" he asked, abruptly, as the last man came up.

"No," replied Allsound.

"Then I think you are mistaken;" he spoke decidedly and smiled incredulously.

"I am sure I am not."

"You are sure?" interrupted the officer, as he faced Allsound and regarded him with a searching, penetrating look.

Allsound quailed, and stammered: "It must be so, I—I think it can't be otherwise."

"Men," said the sergeant, facing round, "your employer says he has lost large sums of money; perhaps he has, but I can hardly believe that his suspicion, that among you will be found the culprit, is well founded; however, as he has lodged complaint and filed the necessary affidavit, I am in duty bound to search your persons, and, if necessary, your places of abode, for evidences of guilt, if there be any."

The men were dumbfounded, but cheerfully submitted to the search. It revealed nothing. The overcoats in the enclosure were then examined, and lo ! a duplicate key of the old safe was found in the inside pocket of the book-keeper's coat. The sergeant smiled significantly, the book-keeper looked bewildered, the others stared.

"Oh ! sergeant," broke out Allsound, in an alarmed voice, "there is surely some mistake."

"Hold ! hold !" said the sergeant, "let us see if this key unlocks the safe from which you claim the property has been stolen," and, placing the key in the safe lock, he shot back the bolt and opened the safe.

"I tell you it's a mistake," again pleaded Allsound, "I would trust my whole fortune to that man ; I won't appear against him ; I would not have him arrested for half I am worth."

"I rather think there was a mistake made by somebody," said the sergeant, slowly shaking his head, "and as you do not desire it, I will not make any arrest, but I will keep this key, and, perhaps, it may some day unlock this mystery, or mistake as you term it."

Allsound turned pale and trembled, but dared not remonstrate.

That afternoon, as Arbyght was returning to the store from his dinner, he met Lionel Trueson, who had just left it.

"Richard," said the boy, sorrowfully, "you must leave the store at once."

"Why ?"

"That key was placed in your pocket."

"You astonish me !"

"It is true, nevertheless."

"The key placed in my pocket," said Richard, musingly.

“Yes.”

“And you ——”

“Question me no further,” answered Lionel, hurriedly, as he darted past him.

Now it was Richard's time to think, and think hard. The result of his thinking led him to quit the place at once. For two weeks he diligently and untiringly searched for employment, but found none; nor was he alone in this fruitless search for bread. The committee, it has already been stated, were discharged, but it remains to be told that they were also proscribed, and had it not been for the material aid of the union, generously bestowed, the children of Trustgood and McFlinn would have suffered and hungered for bread.

Oscar Wood was single, was more boy than man; not yet had “manhood darkened o'er his downy cheek.” He was a young Canadian, with soft and graceful manners; as fair and beautiful as girlhood could wish; a smile and kind word he ever had for all. Yet he was all order and spirit when occasion demanded it; he had in him the elements of a strong manhood; he was the first to join the union, nor was he the least in it.

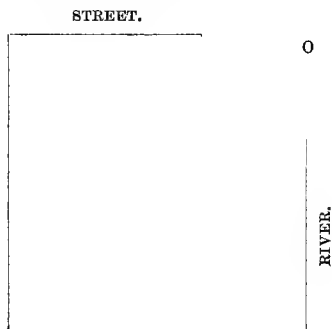
One day Alexander Fargood met Arbyght, and during the conversation that followed suggested that the proscribed workmen might flank their enemies by becoming employers as well as workmen, that is to start business—necessarily on a small scale—for themselves.

“Should you conclude to act upon the suggestion I have made,” said Fargood, as he and Richard separated, “you can rely upon me for any assistance it is in my power to render.”

Richard thought the matter over, sought Trustgood and McFlinn, and talked it over with them, and the result was a determination to give the

scheme a trial on the co-operative basis. Richard had a thousand dollars which he had saved in the army, McFlinn and Trustgood mortgaged their homes for an equal amount; Oscar Wood was given an interest although he was unable to furnish any capital. Though young, he was provident and careful, but being the only support of a widowed mother and invalid sister, his earnings were swallowed up in the gaping maw of subsistence.

An old three-story brick building, formerly used as a warehouse, but now deserted, was rented and after some alterations made to answer for shop, yard, and storehouse. This building stood close to the river, its rear foundation resting on piles, the wall rising from the water's edge. About sixteen feet of the lower story, facing the river and a side street, was not walled up, being built up to the second floor in this shape :



A large iron pillar being placed in the corner from which massive beams were stretched to the wall, and upon these beams the walls were continued two stories higher. Right over this open

corner of the building was a room which Richard fitted up as a sleeping apartment for Oscar and himself, as owing to the enmity with which employers regarded the movement it was deemed advisable to keep constant watch over their property.

The four men finally began operations, but made no effort to sell or find a market for their ware. They stored their work for the first week in the second story of the old building. One dark night on the following week, all of the manufactured stock was removed to Fargood's store-house, and by him sold, no one suspecting that it was not his own. But it was soon discovered by Spindle that the men had disposed of their work and, of course, Relvason and the rest of the employers were soon in possession of the fact.

This creature, Spindle, had no will of his own ; he was completely and willingly the slave of his master—another Fadladeen, whose conduct and opinion, as Moore says, were founded upon that line of Sadi : “ Should the prince at noon-day say it is night, declare that you behold the moon and stars.” And, even more, he partook of the hate of his employer. In this instance he did not rest until he had ascertained how and by what means Richard and his associates disposed of their ware, and, when the secret was discovered, their market was closed. They next attempted to ship their work to outside markets, but Relvason's agents watched them closely, and foiled them upon every occasion. Three weeks after the inauguration of the enterprise inevitable ruin stared these men in the face. They had on hand a large amount of material, besides their manufactured stock. All their available means were locked up in a commodity for which they were denied a market. Thus far, this

was their darkest hour. The dawn came sooner than they expected. Fargoood stood by them. He had just bought a small refinery, and, not being able to supply it himself, concluded to obtain the balance of his supply from the co-operators. The syndicate attacked him in the Board of Trade, but he left the Board, and snapped his fingers at the ring—and thus Right got a head and shoulders lead in the race. The bark was now fairly launched, but not on smooth seas. Like the feeble, glimmering lamp which the Hindoo maiden commits with trembling hands to the bosom of the Ganges, as a presagement of good or evil to her absent lover, and watches with terror its disappearance beneath the dark waters or with rapture its passage through engulfing waves, so the frail bark sailed upon a sea that threatened it with disaster, and its progress was watched with eyes as eager and hearts as pulseless as those of the superstitious girl.

One night Richard was out later than usual, being on a visit of mercy to some sorely-pressed brother, and when he returned he found that Oscar had not retired; that he was waiting for him, and that he was evidently disturbed.

Oscar had seen something. Looking out of a window that fronted the river, and from which a good view on either side could be obtained of the foul, murky stream, he, that night, noticed a small boat move silently and cautiously up to the old building, where it remained a few minutes and then moved across the river, and became lost in the shadow of a large pile of lumber that projected over the docks. In that boat were three crouching, muffled figures.

Richard laughed, and made light of the matter; but Oscar could not be dissuaded from thinking

that some dreadful calamity was impending. For the first time in the knowledge of those who knew him, the smile left his face and the color faded from his cheeks. Next day he was moody, restless, and indisposed to work. Richard watched him thoughtfully, and, toward evening went out and bought two Colt's revolvers, one of which he gave to Oscar. The poor, dejected fellow brightened at once.

That night, as Richard left the old building, he observed a repulsive-looking man standing on the opposite side of the street. Richard advanced toward him and the fellow moved away and darted down an alley. About ten o'clock he returned, and lo! the same man was standing in the same place. Oscar was sleeping sweetly, and, perhaps, dreaming of his home beyond the lakes, when Richard entered the room. Dream on, unconscious sleeper! the shores of your loved Ontario, the smiles of mother and sister, in whose sunshine you now bask, will soon fade, perhaps forever.

Richard lit the gas, examined his pistol, laid it down, then went out into the large cheerless room. He went to the window facing the river and threw it up; a cold snow-laden blast swept with a sullen roar into the room; he peered through the deep, thick darkness without; a slight snow, the first of the season, was falling with a melancholy stillness. Hark! a low, peculiar whistle sounded dismally over the black waters—sounded like the wail of a lost soul! Richard shuddered and peered again into the thick darkness, but saw nothing. What sound is that? He listens attentively; 'tis the struggling, laborious puffing of a steam-tug. Soon the bright, dancing sparks are seen, warring with the snowflakes, and then the large, dark outlines of a vessel laden to

the scuppers with building stone comes slowly into view. On struggles the tug, on comes the tall-masted ship, with slow but steady momentum; the tug passes—God of justice and right, stretch forth thy thunder-laden hand! Save, oh, save!—the floor parts with a cracking sound, the building, for one awful moment, trembles and rocks—an appalling crash, a thundering, fearful splash—a portion of the old building is at the bottom of the feculent river. A great cloud of mortar-dust rises from the ruins and a moment afterward a wild alarm of fire sounded far over the sleeping city.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

ON DEATH'S THRESHOLD.

Soon the proximate streets began to resound and tremble, as the ponderous fire-engines rattled over the hard, rough pavement; they were closely followed by the lighter but not less noisy hose and hook-and-ladder trucks; and the harsh and startling clangor of their warning gongs rose incessantly and increased the wild clamor which freighted the still air with thunderous sound, that startled the homeward and sinward-bound alike, and roused from slumber's repose each habitant for squares around. But there was no fire.

Already a great and constantly augmenting crowd surged and pressed upon the ruins; first among those present were Trustgood, McFlinn and Castaway, and from their bloodless lips and tremb-

ling tongues it was ascertained that two men were buried beneath the bricks and timbers of the old building.

It was very dark, but the silent, fleecy snow had cease to fall, and at a short distance the dimly outlined human forms that flitted hurriedly to and fro looked like moving, palpable shadows; and high above, towered in ghastly grimness, one solitary standing wall, which, like an immovable, shadowy sentinel, calmly looked upon the debris and the excited, confused mass of humanity that gazed in almost speechless horror upon each other and upon the ruins.

Hark! a low groan, evidently from some one in great pain, issues from the depths of the rubbish. Hundreds of necks stretched involuntarily forward to catch the slightest sound.

"Oscar! Oscar! O-s-c-a-r! 'Oh, merciful God!"—came up from 'neath the debris in a hollow, pitiful voice.

"Stand back, men; stand back, I say!" shouted a small, wiry man, elbowing his way through the crowd. He was dressed in a fireman's uniform, and spoke in a manner that commanded respect and obedience. The crowd recognized him and made way at once, and the chief approached the ruin and cast a rapid glance over the scene.

Trustgood, with considerable effort forced his way through the wall of packed humanity, and approaching him, said:

"For God's sake do something quickly, there's
——"

"Help—h-e-l-p!" came up from the ruins in the same pitiful tone, but the voice was fainter, and seemed further away.

"Why, you blockheads, there's a man beneath these timbers," said the chief, and raising his

trumpet, he gave a few sharp, quick commands, and in less than five minutes over thirty firemen and one hundred citizens were engaged in removing the bricks and shattered timbers.

The night, which until now was pitchy dark, began to brighten perceptibly ; high in the zenith a silvery streak of light burst through the dark mass of nimbus clouds that canopied the earth ; the streak grew brighter and broader, the dark pall was broken, and floating away, left a wide belt of blue sky, through which the white silvery moon sailed on in silent grandeur. The shadows now became substances. Aided by the bright moonlight the rescuing force worked faster and more methodically ; the flat roof was soon removed, then a great mass of brick and mortar magically disappeared, and the third floor began to melt away before the persistent strokes of many axes and the giant force of many willing hands.

Tightly wedged between a portion of the second floor and a large wooden girder that supported the joists of the third floor, they found Richard Arbyght. With considerable effort the girder was pried up a few inches, and the mangled workman drawn out and carried a few rods beyond the ruins. Arbyght was found quite close to the bed-room door ; his first thought, when he felt the building giving way, was Oscar, and his first movement was toward him.

A great number of broken, splintered joists, scantling, and boards were now very carefully but expeditiously removed from the spot where Oscar or Oscar's body was supposed to be. As yet no sound that indicated that he was still alive was heard. At last all the rubbish was removed from that particular spot, but no bed, no body could be seen.

Paralyzing terror seized Trustgood, McFlinn, and Castaway as the conviction grew upon them that Oscar was carried down by the thousands of falling brick and buried 'neath the inky waters of the pestilence-breeding river. Many others came to the same conclusion, but the chief, guided by his knowledge of the construction of the building, seemed disposed to think that under a great heap of bricks and mortar and a large part of the roof piled up near the center of the street, the body would be found. Acting on this belief, he ordered the men to remove this mass of debris, and in a few moments various articles of furniture were found. Encouraged by these signs, they persevered, and presently they found evidences of the bed, then the bed itself, and beside it the inanimate body of Oscar, his night-clothes rent and torn, his entire body covered with dripping gore, his flesh and limbs hacked, gashed, and bruised, covered with jagged, gaping wounds, from which the warm blood oozed in little purple, purling streams.

The body was tenderly lifted up and placed on a strong sheet, and four men, taking it by the corners, carried the mangled Oscar and placed him beside the other victim, who was being examined by Dr. Rauchman, a neighboring physician of some note, who had been summoned by Tom Castaway. As soon as the improvised stretcher on which Oscar lay came up, Richard roughly ordered the Doctor to leave him and attend to his mangled companion.

Complying with his request, the physician bent low over the prostrate body, pressed softly with his thumb upon the pulse, then shook his head, and placed his ear close to the breast, when directly his eye brightened, as he detected faint but regular respirations.

"Well, Doctor?" groaned Richard, a world of eagerness and solicitude in his voice.

"Alive; no more," was the sententious reply.

"Will he survive it?" again ventured Richard, in a tone that indicated plainly that he feared, dreaded the answer.

"Possibly—doubtful," was the blunt but truthful answer.

Standing close by his maimed comrades was Tom Castaway, watching keenly each movement of the physician. In a few, brief moments he had lost the old-time careless expression, and its place had come a grim, determined, earnest look, born of a latent power, that needed the awful experience of this night to bring it into full maturity. He reminded one of a man, who, brought face to face with the force of a crisis, determines to meet it fairly, and flinch not. It was the look that brave men bear when the chances of life or death, hanging on a thread, are presented to them—aye, more than that, it was the look of one who, driven to the wall, was doubly dangerous.

Under the physician's immediate direction, two stretchers were quickly made of sheets and narrow strips of splintered board, and on these the two victims were carried to the hospital of the Sisters of Mercy, on Calumet avenue.

On the way, a reporter of one of the leading morning dailies pushed through the crowd and approached the stretcher upon which Arbyght was borne, and plied him thick and fast with questions.

"How did it occur? Do you think there was foul play? Was it purely accidental? Was the building substantial and safe? When did you first notice it giving way? Where were you at the time, and what, if any, were the first indica-

tions of the fall?" were a few of the many inquiries propounded by this fisher of facts, humor, incident and hearsay.

Arbyght was suffering excruciatingly, and hardly comprehended the purport of the questions that were asked him. Looking vaguely at the reporter, he, perhaps unmeaningly, repeated Job's question :

"Canst thou draw out leviathan with a hook?"

The force of this biblical quotation did not seem to strike the reporter at an understandable angle. He stared blankly at Arbyght and said :

"You don't seem to comprehend me."

"There is no power on earth that can be compared with him, still his hope shall fail him, and in the sight of all he shall be cast down," replied Richard, again quoting from Job.

The reporter still regarded him with a perplexed stare ; but professional instinct overcoming his confusion, he returned to the attack, and said :

"What can you mean? What do you mean? Whom can you mean?"

"Selfishness, sir. The power of money," answered Arbyght, and that was all the reporter could elicit from him.

The melancholy procession shortly afterward reached its destination. Dr. Rauchman, being one of the regular attending physicians attached to the hospital, had no difficulty in obtaining beds for his patients. Some of the Sisters busied themselves in preparing the cots, while others brought bandages in vast quantities, warm water and soft sponges. Soon all things were in order, and the physician began an examination of Oscar's injuries. Passing his hand over the lower extremities, he uttered monosyllabic answers to questions apparently arising in his own mind.

“Violent contusion, tegument and muscle badly bruised—ha! fracture; simple longitudinal fracture of the femur—extra capsular, annular attachment of the capsule not affected; trochanter slightly detached.” Then passing the hand over the body he continued, “fracture of the third and fourth ribs, pleurisy or pneumothorax probable; compound fracture of sternum—not dangerous; compound contusion; abrasion of cellular tissue—bad bruise; fracture of clavicle—oblique; severe contusion of skull—dangerous brain fever, likely—bad case.”

He then had the body washed, and, with the aid of two assistants, carefully and tenderly set the fractured bones, and secured them in their places by pasteboard splints and bandages. The contusions and bruises were washed and properly dressed, and a few drops of brandy administered at intervals during the operation; but the patient remained unconscious, motionless in muscle and feature, during the examination, bone-setting, and wound-dressing. When through, the physician again bent over the body and was pleased to find that the respiration was somewhat louder and stronger.

“Now, sir, we will diagnose your case,” he said, turning to Richard, who, by this time, was scarcely able to speak.

A strong stimulant was administered and the examination began.

“Fracture of the patella, right knee; no—simple luxation—not dangerous; ha! transverse fracture of tibia, left foot; compound dislocation of fibula—serious. Let us see,” passing his hand up the body, “some bad bruises; a few insignificant contusions. Oh! you need not make your will just yet. A few weeks’ rest will do you good; you

need rest and must take it now ; so be thankful you escaped so luckily."

"I am not thankful."

"Why not?"

"How can I be thankful when poor Oscar, whom we all loved, is so badly injured?" Richard replied, in an accusing and pleading voice, and tears started from his eyes and rolled down his pallid cheeks.

All present were deeply affected by this strong man's grief

"Will you have an anæsthetic before we set the bones?" said the physician.

"The operation can not be more painful than what I have already suffered ; go ahead," replied Richard, moodily ; and he endured the operation with the stoicism of an Indian at the stake.

Careful, particular instructions were then given concerning Oscar, and shortly afterward the physician left.

It was now past midnight, a night of horrors ended—expanded into a day no less horrible, no less gloomy to two of labor's martyrs—money's victims. And what shall we say of those two longing souls, to whom fair, gentle Oscar was such a mine of happiness, contentment, wealth? Day by day will they look for his weekly installment of words of cheer and comfort, as well as something more substantial but not less welcome, and day after day will disappointment's chill freeze their expectant desire. Day will merge and darken into night, and night will open into day ; weeks of bitterest, unlooked-for anguish will pass down the ceaseless, endless chain of time, but no tidings of the absent loved one will reach that pair, tortured by doubts, a prey to cruel, changing uncertainties, haunted by indecision, and paralyzed

by gnawing suspense. But the doubts, uncertainties and suspense will disappear like a black cloud and unfold—an eclipsed sun.

The morning papers gave a cursory account of the catastrophe, dwelling mostly on the loss sustained by the owner of the old building and the probable causes of its fall. Architects and builders were mildly flaggellated—the general verdict being that the building fell because it was unable to stand, at least that was the concreted pith of all remarks upon the subject. The several newspaper accounts of the affair ended with the seemingly unimportant item that two workmen, whose names were given, were more or less injured by the fall. Under the reign of selfishness, human life, especially the life of a toiler, is of less account, cheaper than it was under the feudal or slave system. This is a marked characteristic of society graded by a money standard, a society whose individual members stand upon a column of money, whose base or bulb is affected by the variations of the profit and loss account of the individual at the apex. Should the profit side of the account increase the individual will shoot up in the social scale proportionately, but should the loss account increase he drops in the same ratio.

The death of a workman never affects the profit and loss account of a capitalist under the free-wages system, under the slave system it did; hence it is that the loss of a horse is regarded as a greater bereavement, by the money barons of our day, than the loss of every laborer in their employ. Such is the unholy, rapacious and iniquitous system of self.

CHAPTER XXIX.

LOVE'S CROSS IS HEAVY.

"Mary, where are the morning papers?" asked Vida Geldamo, looking into the sitting-room where Mary Marmane was busily dusting.

"Paul has taken them away, I believe," was the answer in a subdued voice, the head slightly averted.

"But they have papers at the office," returned Vida, in a doubtful tone.

"That may be, but I am sure he carried them away, for I saw him fold them up and put them in his pocket," said Mary, going to the far end of the room apparently to look for something.

"He never did so before," said Vida, musingly, "and just the morning I most desired to read the musical and theatrical news; it's abominably provoking!" and she stamped her foot a little impatiently, then broke into a clear, ringing laugh as she disappeared through the door into the drawing-rooms.

"She will hear it soon enough, poor dear," said Mary, in soothing soliloquy, when she found herself alone, "and yet she may not care. It's hard to tell; but I am certain she is in love, and surely she don't care for that All—sound!" she whispered to herself.

Mary was sure her young mistress was in love.

One woman can detect this sentiment or passion in another, not only sooner than a man, but really before the person affected is herself aware of the presence of the sweet conqueror.

Mary Marmane was a country girl, but one that could hold her own with her city cousins as far as

beauty of person and feature was concerned. A symmetrical form; a neck like a column of Parian marble; arms that were shapely and graceful; a wavy mass of chestnut-brown hair; a dark hazel eye, and a bewitching mouth and pearly teeth, which a smile now and then disclosed, and you have a type of the unassuming beauty that blooms, fades, and dies oftentimes unappreciated on the farm and in our rural towns and villages.

To Vida Geldamo, Mary was more companion than maid. When out, she always walked with her mistress, not behind her, and she more frequently advised than obeyed. In a word, although these two occupied widely different positions, still they were intimate friends, and had very few secrets that were not common to both. There were two causes for this: Vida's mother had been dead for some years, and she naturally felt the need of a companion of her own sex in whom to confide and on whom to lean; and again, in her goodness of heart, purity of motive, liberal ideas, and generous conceptions of humanity, she could never and never did believe that the possession of money made the heart warmer, truer, or the soul purer.

As the afternoon wore away, Vida became quite restless. She went from one room to another, from the piano to her work-basket, and then to a book, which she dropped in a moment, sighed heavily, returned to the piano, dallied with the keys for an instant, sighed again, and then called Mary. The maid answered, and came at once. Vida was at the window in the front drawing-room.

"Sit down," she said, pointing to a seat beside her.

Mary sat down. A silence ensued. Vida seemed very thoughtful, and there was about her an air of refined, dignified displeasure. Presently the gate

opened—ha! she flushed up at once, turned quickly, and looked out. It was only Paul. The color left her cheeks, and a look of keen disappointment swept over her face.

“Why don’t he come——?” She ended the question abruptly; looked confusedly at Mary, the rising crimson growing into a deeper flush, and dyeing her whole face with its glow.

“Whom do you expect?” said Mary, tenderly, but with a peculiar *sang froid*.

Vida’s blushes grew more intense, and she looked down in apparent perplexity.

Paul came in and sat down in a seat facing Vida and Mary. The former was gazing intently into the street, and seemed hardly aware of her brother’s presence.

“Has Richard been here this afternoon?” asked Paul, in a tone of affected but rather doubtful indifference.

“We have not seen him,” said Vida, a trifle pettishly, still gazing through the window.

“He promised to come, did he not?” resumed Paul.

“Men never keep their promises,” she replied, in sadness rather than in anger.

“Why so sweeping in your charge, sister? He may have been prevented by some unforeseen circumstances, perhaps an accident, or ——”

“An accident!” she interruptingly repeated, with alarmed emphasis, as she faced around sharply and gazed searchingly into his face.

“Why, Vida, suppose he did meet with an accident, what would that be to you? Such things happen every day.”

“Paul ——” (there was an immensity of reproach in the tone) “is he not our cousin; did he not save your life and mine?”

"Well, now my dear, you know I am incapable of ingratitude, so pray spare me those reproaches," answered Paul, chidingly, but good-humoredly.

"Did you see him?" Mary put the question direct; there was an assuring look in her eye.

Vida seemed pleased and evidently much relieved. It was the very question she would liked to have asked.

"I have seen him; it is nothing," he replied.

"Then there has been an accident?" said Vida, and turning to Mary, she continued a little sharply—"and you knew it."

"Oh! don't blame me, it was Paul's fault," pleaded Mary, coaxingly.

"Yes, it was my fault, I admit; but the worst is over, and now I will tell you all about it," said Paul, and then he gave a full and clear account of the whole affair; but when he described the falling of the old building and the finding of the mangled men, Vida hid her face in Mary's bosom—did so involuntarily, as if she would veil from her sight the horrid spectacle.

"It is quite clear and evident to my mind," said Paul, in ending the horrible recital, "that the employers and another party whom I might mention had a hand in this business; that building never fell except by the agency of some force at present beneath the surface."

"The cowardly wretches," sobbed Vida and Mary in the same breath; they were both crying.

"Jealousy is invariably cowardly, and of all things on earth capital is the most jealous of its claimed privileges," said Paul, rising to go.

"But," resumed Vida, retaining him by a look, "what other party could have an interest in injuring these men?"

Paul went close to her, and said, in an undertone:

"Allsound is Relvason's tool."

"Are you sure?" asked Vida, opening her eyes very wide.

"I am positive," he replied, with a slow, assured emphasis.

Paul left.

The story Vida had just heard shocked her, grated harshly on her tender nerves, bewildered her senses to a certain extent; but the reaction thawed her reserve, and it all ended in a greater flood of tears and a closer knit friendship between herself and Mary, as there was now another and most precious secret, common property between them.

Richard spent a restless day and night. The fracture was not so painful as the bruised body—he felt as if he had been pounded with a mallet. Toward noon he became impatient, and asked the nurse if he could not have some morphine or chloral, or an anodyne or sedative of any kind. The good Sister looked at him kindly, with great, mild, liquid eyes, and soothingly, but decidedly, told him that sedatives were never given without direct orders from the attending physician.

Richard recognized the wisdom and necessity of this course, and silently acquiesced.

About three o'clock Dr. Rauchman came in and went straight to Oscar's cot. He found him still unconscious, but his pulse was high and respiration hurried.

"Fever—brain or nervous, or both," muttered the physician. Then turning to Arbygth, he asked suddenly—abruptly:

"Has this young man been addicted to the use of liquors, strong tea or coffee, or the use of tobacco?"

"No, sir," replied Richard. "He has lived a singularly abstemious life."

"Been given to any other excesses?" asked the physician.

"Not to my knowledge; his moral life is without a blemish."

"Sprightly, cheerful temperament?"

"Unusually so."

"Then he will recover."

"Are you confident of that?" asked Richard in an eager, anxious voice.

"The mind and body act upon each other reciprocally," resumed the physician, taking no notice of the pointed question. "And health in one promotes health in the other, or aids it to recover from an unwonted shock, and the mental discipline practiced by this person will aid him wonderfully in this emergency, and then his nervous system, not being shattered or enfeebled by the use of nervine destroyers, is in a condition to do him yeoman service. The chances for his *physical* recovery are more than even."

"Why, Doctor, you don't mean——"

"Young man you are extremely inquisitive," broke in the physician, with an evasive laugh.

Before he left, Richard asked him for a sedative.

"No, sir; shan't have it," was the blunt reply; but he continued in a milder tone:

"Nervous system severely strained, shocked, shattered—uncertain how it would act. You must be careful, sir; remember that if this other victim had been given to excesses of any kind he would be dead by this time; and in your condition a sedative might irritate, not allay," and the physician strode out of the ward, and going to the hospital office wrote prescriptions and gave directions for the treatment of his patients, as he called

Arbyght and Wood. They were well cared for and tenderly and carefully nursed by two Sisters—almoners of mercy—who had been especially detailed to attend them alone and be constantly near them.

On the second day, in the forenoon, Richard fell into a deep reverie, and lapsed into a fitful sleep; his father's cruel death, his mother's untimely end, his sister's blighted hopes, and his own hard lot rose like ghosts of departed sorrows to vex and haunt him. Then Vida Geldamo rose before his rapturous vision at the back of fancy's magical wand, and hidden deep in diaphanous, luminous loveliness, she seemed at once the soul and dispenser of joy eternal—eternally remote.

From this sleep he awoke with a vivid remembrance of the pain that had tortured him, then lay quiet, slowly opening and closing his eyes, enjoying the sensation of relief; a refreshing breeze came in at the window, wafting to him the sweet odor of flowers; the declining sun threw the shadow of rustling leaves upon the white-sanded floor; low, sweet strains of music reached his ear, and as he turned his aching head in the direction of the sound, he saw that his window was under the shadow of a large tree, through which he could see white-capped sisters flitting along the porches, from one part of the building to another, on their errands of mercy; the tender words of "Ave Sanctissima" rose and fell upon the air in cadence sweet; he was exquisitely susceptible to the power of music and it seemed as though the low, soft melody expressed a something in his heart that words could not.

"Ave Sanctissima,
We lift our souls to thee!
Ora pro nobis,
'Tis night-fall on the sea.

Watch us while shadows lie
Far o'er the water spread,
Hear the heart's lonely sigh—
Thine, too, hath bled."

As the last note died away he fancied that he heard the rustle of angel's wings, and almost wished that he might never leave this haven of rest to battle again with the world.

Presently he heard the sound of light steps upon the matting in the aisle of the ward ; he looked up with a startled expression, and his heart beat wildly as he saw Vida quite close to his cot. His face beamed with bright radiance, his eyes darted quick glances of pleasure, joy, love.

"Oh ! Mr. Arbyght, what a sad accident ; I'm so sorry, but I hope you are better to-day ?" There was a subdued ring of pleasure in her voice, and a silent, pleased look in her eye.

"I feel much better now," he replied, glowing with repressed happiness. "It is so kind and good of you to come ; I thought this morning I was friendless—alone," he continued, in a soft, delicious, ecstatic trance, gazing at her with moist eyes, a glad smile playing around his tremulous lips.

"Friendless ? How cruel of you to think so," she replied, softly, but very reproachfully.

"Why, what a thoughtless fellow I am, to be sure, to keep you standing all this time," he said, pointing to a chair beside the cot, which he attempted to move a little further off, but she gracefully took the chair and sat down quite close to him—companionably close. The act sent the sufferer to heaven at once, where, perhaps, the performer of the act was before him, for she blushed like a June rose and looked supremely happy.

The prudish reader may think this gentle being, tender as the leaves of hope, and pure and spotless

as angels in thought, went beyond certain despotic, conventional bounds ; but what sight is more holy, more beautiful, freer from the grossness of human nature than the first appearance of genuine love—the budding affection of a young, gentle, confiding, virgin soul ?

“I am an ungrateful wretch, I admit, as Paul has been to see me,” he resumed, a little humbly, apologetically.

“How is your friend and fellow-victim ?” asked Vida.

“The Doctor thinks better of his case to-day ; but why victims ?”

“Oh ! Paul has given me his view of the matter, and, I believe with him, that you are the victims of a foul conspiracy. If I were a man I would never rest until I had exposed and brought them to justice,” said Vida, with flashing eyes ; then blushing suddenly, she added, “but what a silly girl I am—excuse me, Mr. Arbyght, but I think it was an atrocious act.”

Mary Marmane, who came with Vida, but remained in the hall talking with a Sister, now entered the ward, and, after a few words with Richard, went across to Oscar’s cot. She came back directly, but her eyes were heavy with a suspicious moistness, and she did not utter a word while she remained.

When Vida arose to go, she gave her hand to Richard, and the poor fellow trembled from head to foot. An indescribable sensation of bliss swept through his veins like an electric current ; a longing, violent, irresistible desire to kiss the tiny hand, the dainty glove—more blest than he—seized him, but, making an effort and swallowing a great lump in his throat, he said, in a voice husky with repressed emotion :

“Miss Geldamo, you must not come to see me any more; I am thankful—you will never know how profoundly grateful and thankful I am for your kindness”—his voice fell to a soft whisper—“your presence diffuses a heavenly sunshine; but, alas, its blissful rays are not for me—not for me.”

“You great, silly fellow, of course I shall come again,” she whispered softly, hurriedly, snatched away her hand quickly, blushed divinely, smiled beatifically, and was gone.

After this she came regularly every day visitors were received at the hospital, always accompanied by Mary Marmane, who invariably found her way to Oscar’s cot, and invariably left it with a swelling heart and speechless tongue.

These were days of unalloyed happiness to two congenial souls, and though Arbyght spoke not of love, still his devotion was none the less manifest, none the less understood, and a verbal declaration was not needed to satisfy him that his love was reciprocated. It was a heaven-ordained union of two hearts, not fettered by conventional restraints nor marred by the edict of social custom. For hours she would sit beside him, her hand gently clasped in his, every look mutual bliss, every tone and gesture of one—rapture to the other—

“Like echo sending back sweet music fraught
With twice the aerial sweetness it had brought.”

But the spell was rudely broken; greed, jealously, revenge furnished the engine of parental supervision with a strong motor, and down came the trip hammer of authority, destroying the bright crystal cup of cupid, spilling the sweet nectar of love, and leaving two thirsty souls in the parching desert of separation.

Impotent man! Bid the endless thread of time to cease uncoiling or backward unwind on its eternal spool; bid the white, mild moon her changing phases drop; bid all nature her immutable laws reverse, but attempt not to dry up with the strongest, fiercest heat of opposition's fire the perennial spring of genuine love. Vain the attempt, and more foolish than vain; opposition is the purest oxygen to love's flame.

During the past week Relvason discovered that Calumet avenue was one of the pleasantest drives in the city, and he might be seen rolling past the hospital in gaudy splendor once or twice a day, with his face close to his carriage window. Twice he saw Vida and Mary enter the hospital. He felt confident that she visited Arbygth, but to convince others, whose fertility of imagination was not equal to his own, he hired a man who knew Richard to watch the hospital, enter and ask to see Arbygth immediately after Vida was seen going in. This mean piece of diabolism succeeded admirably; the man called, inquired for Arbygth, and was shown in. Richard received him kindly and thanked him warmly for calling. After the man had left, Vida said that she felt sure that he was a spy. A woman in love is all eyes and intuition.

When Vida left the hospital that afternoon she carried with her a heart like lead. She seemed to be weighed down with a vague premonition of approaching trouble. When she reached home, she went to her room, and cried as if her heart would break, and yet she could not, if asked, give a satisfactory cause for her tears.

That evening, as Vida was wearily reclining on Paul's shoulder, her father came into the room with a quick, nervous step, and with white,

tightly-compressed lips. Vida trembled slightly and turned pale. She had never before seen that white, compressed lip, that stern, unrelenting look—Mr. Geldamo was ever a kind, indulgent parent—and she knew that something unusual had occurred. He sat down, and an oppressive silence ensued—five minutes elapsed—

“Vida, my child!”

“Well, papa;” and she glided toward him and knelt down on a cushioned stool at his feet, and looked up wistfully into his hard face.

“Mr. Allsound called to see me this afternoon.”

“Did he, papa?”—turning pale.

“And he made me a formal proposition for your hand.”

“Oh! papa!”—paler.

“And now, child, what have you to say?”

“That Mr. Allsound is not a gentleman!” said Vida, with dilated nostril and flashing eye.

“Why, Vida! What can you mean?”

“He has already proposed to me, and I rejected his offer, and he knows I would under no circumstances marry him.”

“Not marry him, Vida?”

“Never!”

“But it is my wish, child!”

“But, papa! you would not have me marry a man I could neither love nor respect—a man I despise?”

“Nonsense, child! you know not what you say. Love is an ephemeral dream, a fleeting shadow, an illusion. Respect will always come with marriage, and this is a very desirable alliance. Mr. Allsound is quite wealthy, highly connected, and loves you devotedly.”

“But, papa dear, what are wealth and high

connections, compared with happiness and contentment? I do not love him, I almost hate him, papa."

"Stuff, child! you would learn to love him, as your husband, in time."

"I never could love Mr. Allsound," she replied, speaking slowly and deliberately.

"Why not, pray!" he asked, in a sharp tone.

"Because——"

"Because," he repeated, in a sarcastic manner, and continuing, said: "Does the 'because' mean that there is another attachment?"

"It does, papa;" she answered, with a blush.

"Oh, ho! and pray why has this affair been veiled from my observation?" he asked, in an angry tone.

"Dear papa, he is poor, and I feared you would be angry," replied Vida, blushing still more.

"So, you are ashamed of him?"

"Ashamed of him?" she repeated, with burning cheeks and glittering eyes, "I am proud of him. He is as much Mr. Allsound's superior as you are, papa. He is honorable, brave, manly, independent. He is my superior. There is nobody like him; and, oh, papa, I love him so dearly," and she burst into tears, clasped her father's knees, and sobbed convulsively. He seemed to relent, for he tried to calm and soothe her.

"I did not think it had gone that far," he said, reprovingly, but softly.

"Oh! you don't know how I love him; it will kill me if you part us," she answered, in accents of the deepest anguish.

Paul, who until now had remained silent, came forward and said:

"Father, let us reason about the matter. Now, it seems to me that Mr. Arbyght is a more desirable

alliance than Mr. Allsound. The latter has money, it is true, but he has little else than money; while the former, though lacking money, has an inexhaustible fund of mental wealth, business ability and tact, physical stamina, and not a little experience. Give him the same chance that you often give entire strangers at the request of some supposed friend, and in a few years even you will be proud of him. Why, father, who are our rising business men? Are they not the hardy, sturdy sons of farmers and hard-working mechanics? And they invariably succeed; while those who inherit fortunes very frequently die in poverty and want. They are not fit for business; they can boast neither muscular nor mental prowess; they are puny, lanky, miserable imitations of man, and dissipation, and finical, feminine frivolity are the only things in which they excel."

"My son, you have drawn quite a flattering picture of yourself."

"Oh! you seem to forget that your father was a New England mechanic and my mother an Illinois farmer's daughter. I do not lay any claim to the honor you would have me assume."

Mr. Geldamo was on the wrong side of the argumentative fence, and he knew it; but, as usual in such cases, the knowledge only served to still further provoke him.

"Paul, your remarks are anything but filial or respectful. Have I not toiled late and early for you both; watched over you in infancy and in youth? You have been my constant care these twenty years, and is this the return you make? An up-start, a fortune-seeker cunningly steals my daughter's love, and now she cares so little for her poor father as not to respect his wishes. But I have a father's rights, and I will enforce them.

Vida, you shall never marry this man with my consent, and if you marry him against my will I shall discard you, disown you, curse——”

“Oh! father! dear father! don't say that; I will never marry without your consent; I will never marry at all. I can never love another. Kill me, but do not curse me. Kill me, but do not say an unkind word of him. You do not know him——”

“I will see him this very evening,” and he stood up as if to depart.

Vida sprang to her feet; threw her arms around his neck, clung to him, kissed him, and cried out in her anguish:

“Don't go now, you are angry, and if you plant a dagger in his soul it will kill me, for in heart, soul—everything—we are one,” and, with one long gasp, her hands fell from his neck, her eyes closed, her head fell back on his arms—she had fainted.

Spin swiftly, oh Time! thy sorrow-laden thread of fate; thy fleeting moments are stingless now. Gold, gold, thou tyrant, forever deaf to love or mercy's wailing cry, thou art powerless now for a few brief seconds.

The white, upturned face pleaded mutely and earnestly, but the father did not relent. His daughter wed worth without wealth? perish the thought! Wed baseless wealth without an atom of worth? Yes, gladly, willingly.

CHAPTER XXX.

FATHER VERSUS LOVER.

The hours flew by in their ceaseless flight. Two days passed slowly away, the third came, bringing with it bright hopes to Richard Arbyght. It was visiting day.

The afternoon began to wane; the slanting rays of the Western sun came in through the long, narrow windows, crept noiselessly along the floor, reaching the cot, crept up the iron frame, moved slowly along the white counterpane and reached his face; he sighed wearily and moved uneasily; at last he heard footsteps coming down the aisle, and, looking up, saw—not the daughter, but the father. An eternity of misery shot through his soul in an instant, and left an unnaturally old look on his face.

“It is common rumor that you are paying your addresses to Miss Geldamo, my daughter, is it true?” said the banker, after a cold, formal greeting.

Richard looked at the banker keenly for a moment, as if to read his face, and then, in a firm but quiet manner, he replied:

“To be frank with you, sir, I love her fondly and devotedly, but I have never mentioned my love to her.”

“But you know that my daughter reciprocates this love?”

“I have been presumptuous enough to think so.”

“And dishonorable enough to encourage it?”

“I have yet to learn that a pure, unselfish love for a woman is dishonorable,” replied Richard,

sharply, then mildly added, "you are her father, and I will pocket the insult."

"But you are no match for my daughter."

"She is too good for any man ; but, sir, I may some day be her equal in a worldly sense, and, in your estimation, a desirable match."

"And you would have her wait until you can make a fortune, and by so doing seriously compromise her future prospects in case you fail?"

"Your remarks are bitter, but I feel they are just from your standpoint ; but, although I do not say that you are mercenary, yet does it not look as though you were putting a money value on your daughter ? If she were willing to wait for me I would strive hard for her sake."

The banker winced under this rebuke, but he was unchanged in his purpose.

"Mr. Arbyght, our views on this matter, I see, will not coincide, therefore I must use a parent's prerogative. It may be a painful duty, but it must be performed ; this affair must terminate where it is ; it must end here ; you must never see Miss Geldamo again, never speak to her, or attempt to be ought to her than an entire stranger. This is my wish, as her father, and I trust that you are honorable enough to respect it."

The doom of death never fell on convicted innocence with more stunning force or greater pain than did these words fall upon the ear of Richard Arbyght. His pride alone prevented him from breaking down completely. After a pause, in which he struggled to marshal his dazed senses, he said :

"Mr. Geldamo, if it is Vida's wish that I shall never see her or speak to her again, that wish shall be my law ; but should we ever meet, and should she choose to recognize me, no power on earth will

prevent me from speaking to her, obeying her, loving her !” and, sick and sore at heart, he turned his head away.

For two long, weary days he busied himself in grave digging, and then Mary Marmane came alone. At sight of her his face brightened. She did not have much to say, and her visit was very brief. When she arose to leave she handed him a letter, and before he recovered from his surprise, she was gone. At sight of the superscription he quivered like an aspen; he opened the envelope, and found inclosed a note with the following quotation from Scott, delicately penned, but evidently with a trembling hand :

“The rose is fairest when ’tis budding new,
And hope is brightest when it dawns from fears.
The rose is sweetest when washed with morning dew;
And love is loveliest when embalmed in tears.”

Light always follows darkness; hope on, hope ever.
Sorrowfully, but devotedly,

VIDA GELDAMO.

Richard resolved to live; he substituted castle building for grave digging, and was happier. It was now three weeks since the wreck of the old store-house, and he was able to sit up and move about; his young, healthy blood and vigorous constitution, coupled with the ambitious promptings of his love were powerful remedial agents.

Tom Castaway was a constant visitor at the hospital, and did much by his sprightly conversation and quaint humor to enable Richard to “kill time,” as Tom expressed it. One day, shortly after the visit of Mr. Geldamo, Castaway found him in a doleful mood.

“Hello! What’s the matter now?”

“I’m not feeling well, Tom,” replied Richard, dejectedly.

"Mind or body?"

"Well, to tell the truth, Tom, I am a trifle sad to-day."

"I should say you were; you look like a man who had quarreled with his sweetheart and didn't have the courage to admit he was wrong; but, beg your pardon, perhaps I'm on dangerous ground."

"It's worse than that, Tom; but please say no more about it."

Castaway, seeing that Arbyght was slightly annoyed, replied:

"Well, no matter what it is, my boy, you must think no more about it."

"It is not always possible to change the current of thought," said Richard, gloomily.

"Nonsense, Dick, nonsense; why half the misery of the world comes from thinking too much about our troubles and about things we can not understand. I would sooner sleep soundly while a burglar was in my room, than wake up and run the danger of looking into the muzzle of his revolver."

"Perhaps the knowledge that the burglar could not injure you financially induces this reflection."

"There now, Dick, that was unkind," and both laughed heartily.

"However, Arbyght, I'm serious. When I was in love, for instance, I floated in a hazy atmosphere, every breath of which inebriated, but when the strong light of fact dispelled the haze, it left me the most wretched being, I thought, on all the earth. I tell you, old boy, there is more joy in illusion and twilight than there is in reality and sunlight. Take, for example, the mimic stage; who would care to hear an opera or see a play in the bright glare of day; you need the mellow gaslight to transform painted canvas into

mountain scenery, rocky gorges, placid lakes, rushing rivers, foam-crested waves, ruins old, spacious mansions, and meadows green—”

“Hold on, Castaway,” interrupted Richard, “this is eloquence, not reason.”

“Oh, bother the eloquence! I did not mean it. What I want to say is, that there are times when it is best not to think too seriously.”

“But for serious thought we would have neither scientist, philosopher, or statesman,” replied Arbyght.

“That may be true, Dick; I rather like the scientist and philosopher until they become iconoclasts and undertake to destroy the idols of our youth, then I enter a solemn protest.”

“But what has all this to do with a man whose mind is tortured with an ever-present misery.”

“Simply this: the tortured mind can find relief if it seeks it. When clouds obscure the sun and the sky is black and lowering, do we not know that the sun shines just as brightly as ever behind the dark pall? Besides, the clouds are a shade brighter in the region of the sun. Keep your eye upon the bright spots of life and the dark ones will not trouble you so much. The sweetest music I ever heard floated over the walls of a convent yard, where a band of little orphan girls were singing ‘Home, Sweet Home;’ I tell you, my boy, it does not pay to throw too bright a glare upon the realities of life.”

“All right, Tom,” said Richard, giving him his hand, “you have succeeded. I’m feeling much better now, I don’t know what would become of me if you did not drop in to cheer me up. I am certain of one thing, your heart is warm and true if your views are peculiar. God bless you, Tom! come again, if you can, to-morrow.”

A few days afterward Richard left the hospital and went to work again in a shop that Trustgood and McFlynn had rented and fitted up.

When the fever reached the second stage, Oscar began to mutter incoherently and rave wildly, and on several occasions terrified the good Sisters who attended him by the horrible pictures his delirium evoked. For five weeks he remained suspended between life and death. The crisis was finally reached and safely passed, and the patient began to recover bodily strength, but still he failed to recognize even Arbyght. The physician for the first few weeks examined his eyes every day, and always turned away with a look that spoke volumes were it rightly interpreted. One day Arbyght called and found Oscar sleeping quietly; he sat down by the cot and watched him eagerly; presently he awoke and looked at Richard with a fixed, stony stare.

"Oh, Oscar," said Richard in a joyous tone, "I am so glad you are getting better."

"Who are you?"

"Who am I? Why, Oscar, don't you know me?"

"You are a shark without fins," and the glassy expressionless eyes turned full upon him. A sharp pang darted through his heart, and he covered his face with his hands and groaned aloud. Oscar Wood was a maniac.

"Ho, Arbyght! You here?" Looking up he saw Dr. Rauchman.

"Would to God I had never been here or anywhere," replied Richard.

The physician nodded gravely, and proceeded to examine his patient.

"Well, my good fellow, how do you feel to-day?" he asked, looking kindly at Oscar.

"The son of Atlas would be in heaven but for the sharks," was the reply, with the same stony stare.

"Is there any hope, Doctor?" whispered Richard, huskily.

The latter shook his head, pondered a moment, and replied:

"Doubtful, but he is young, and nature may overcome it, or his insanity may assume a phase from which the mind may be aroused by some powerful physical shock. The contusion on the skull was the primary cause, although it was aggravated by the terrible derangement of the nervous system and the fever that followed. It is truly a sad case."

"He has some singular vagaries," continued the physician. "He believes that he is the son of Atlas, and he has an instinctive dread of sharks."

It may be possible to account for these vagaries, as the doctor termed them. It is probable that the past was not completely obliterated and that memory still existed, but the circle in which it now revolved was, compared to its former sphere, what the glass aquarium is to the fish taken from the ocean. Owing to the narrow compass in which his memory now operated, only vague and imperfect ideas of the past could be formed. May it not be that his past conceptions of labor and capitalists now took the shapes of Atlas and sharks?

As soon as his strength would permit it, he was removed to the State insane asylum at Jacksonville, a beautiful town about thirty-four miles southwest from Springfield.

There now devolved upon Arbyght the saddest task of his whole life—writing an account of the dreadful occurrence to Oscar's mother and sister. The letter contained a check for three hundred dollars, the joint contribution of the union men.

The best, most potent cure for a troubled mind is work. Thwarted love is unquestionably a troublesome grief, a keen, sharp-edged pain, that will severely try the endurance of the most stoical soul. It is a caustic-pointed misery that eats the heart with teeth of torture hot as molten steel. Still it will fail to kill the man who plunges boldly into the turmoil of mental or physical labor; but with a tender, fragile woman, who mopes and pines, even amid the most luxurious surroundings, it is different—it is death.

Richard worked hard during the day in the shop; harder still at night pouring over books and manuscript. His hungry soul fed on hope, but there were times when black despondency shadowed and enveloped him in a night of despair, from which love and hope had many a hard struggle to extricate him. He believed that Vida would wait for him; Paul had hinted as much, and he determined to prove worthy of her love, and faithfully determined to make for her a home which, if not equal to the one she enjoyed, would be at least not wholly inferior to it. He did not underrate the magnitude of the undertaking, but, for love, what will not man undertake and accomplish?

“Love is indestructible;
It's holy flame forever burneth;
From Heaven it came, to Heaven returneth.”

Vida Geldamo's love was her very life—earnest, pure, devoted and immutable; thwarted, it cast a gloom over her existence that made life almost unbearable.

After her father had left her on the evening when he so peremptorily bade her see Arbyght no more, she went up to Paul, placed her wet cheek against his shoulder, and gazing at him piteously,

twined her arms gently about his neck, kissed him softly, and murmured:

“You are so kind, so noble, so good, so like poor mamma; but, oh, Paul! I feel as if I would like to die! The world, a short hour ago so bright, is now all gloom, shadow and sorrow!” And she nestled closer, clinging to him as if he was now the only hope of her existence.

The next day she was attacked with a violent headache, which lasted for three days, during which her appetite failed her almost entirely. This was the beginning; her cheeks grew thin and pale, her step lost its elasticity, and her eyes frequently dimmed with tears. The great house became silent as a tomb—no music, no mirth, no cheerfulness—the house had lost its soul. Vida wandered from one room to another like a visible spirit, seen but not felt.

One evening Paul came home and told her he had called on Richard unexpectedly, and found him sighing over a small sheet of French note-paper.

A faint blush tinged Vida's pale cheeks.

“And would you believe it, sis,” said Paul, archly, “although he concealed it hurriedly, I saw a well-known signature. Perhaps you would like to know whose it was? I am sure I know the writer. It is wondrous strange,” he added, with a roguish twinkle in his eye and a provoking smile on his lips, “what an effect little things sometimes have on a strong man.”

“Paul, are you not ashamed of yourself!” and with a quick, throbbing heart and glowing face Vida left the room. A few moments later there came from the drawing-room a cheering, gladsome sound; “music's golden tongue,” tied so long, was loosed again, and mingling with the soft harmonious notes of the piano, Vida's charming voice

was heard. Her father looked pleased ; he thought to himself, the infatuation is wearing away. Paul looked sad and thoughtful ; he knew more of the different phases of love than did the father whose nature was too rigidly prosaic, with little ideality or anything else that did not taste and smell of gold. Paul knew that he was the cause of Vida's present happiness, and although it pleased him to see her happy, still it saddened him, for it showed how deep a hold love had taken on her young soul.

A few days passed, and Vida's spirits drooped as before ; Mr. Geldamo became alarmed and sent for the family physician, who strangely happened to be none other than Dr. Rauchman. He came, examined her pulse and tongue, and looked puzzled ; he asked a few questions, looked more perplexed than ever, then made some further inquiries, stood up and strode across the room with a nervous step, came back, looked at Vida critically, and said bluntly :

"There is nothing in the *Materia Medica* that will reach *your* case."

"I know that, Doctor," she answered, resignedly.

"Then, why send for me?"

"Ask papa."

"I'll lecture him soundly ; there are but few angels on this earth and we can not afford to lose any of them."

He went straight to the library.

"Mr. Geldamo, your daughter, if left alone, or left to physic, will die."

"Great heavens ! Doctor, you can't mean it?"

"I can mean it ! I do mean it !"

"What seems to be the matter?"

"Ask yourself, you know better than I do."

“ Well, Doctor, you are an old friend and I will confide in you,” and he told him all.

A stormy scene followed. The doctor was a man rough in speech, but beneath that exterior there beat a heart as gentle, soft and true, as ever throbbed in woman’s breast. The father was unyielding, the doctor unsparing in entreaty and condemnation; the father persisted, the doctor insisted, and the result was that the doctor left the house in a rage. The next day Mr. Geldamo started with Vida for New Orleans.

No lost spirit condemned in Eblis Halls to roam, by inward fire consumed, e’er woeful tortures suffered equal to those endured by Richard Arbyght when this news reached him.

CHAPTER XXXI.

DEEDS OF DARKNESS.

“ Please, sir, where does Dr. Rauchman live?” said a pale-faced, hungry-looking, little girl.

“ Drive on, James,” said Alvan Relvason, stepping quickly into his carriage to join his wife and daughter, a contemptuous sneer on his sallow face.

“ What is it, papa?” queried a closely-muffled figure, in a languid voice.

“ Oh, some beggar,” he answered, as the carriage rolled away.

It doubtless did not occur to Alvan Relvason that beggars and dives are inseparable; that where a dozen very rich men are found, five hundred

poor men barely exist; that great individual fortunes are like oases in a vast desert of poverty; that great individual wealth is always produced at the expense of nearly a hundred-fold greater individual poverty; and yet such is the case. A beggar? Who made her so? This is a pertinent question. It belongs to a series of questions which demand thoughtful and fair consideration. A beggar? Yet in her veins may flow the blood of kings, for on the faces of beggars are written histories older than our civilization. The evolving forces of humanity are unerring in their results, however strange their processes may appear. The squalid beggar of to-day may be the fountain head which, in the course of time, will develop a mighty current, that will leave its impress upon future generations; and the descendant of a kingly line, with the blue blood of a faultless pedigree flowing in his veins, may, in the same period, be relegated—like the last of the Plantagenets—to a butcher shop, or to tramping the highways begging for bread.

The only answer to the child's question was a rude push, which sent the poor little thing staggering across the sidewalk, and, in endeavoring to recover herself, she slipped and fell. She uttered a sharp cry of pain, got up quickly, but limped, and could hardly move.

"Hold, little one; stop a moment!" said a manly voice, and Richard Arbyght, turning a corner close by, came fully into view.

"Are you hurt, child?" he asked, kindly.

"A little, sir; but I don't mind it," she answered, looking up and displaying a pale, pinched-looking little face, with tears plowing deep furrows through the dirt on her cheeks. She was apparently about ten years of age, scantily clad, without

shawl, cloak, or stockings, her dress threadbare, her feet covered with a miserable pretense in the shape of shoes, and an old faded scarf tied around her head. Her limbs and hands were red with cold, and her poor little body shivered in melancholy sympathy with her chattering teeth.

"Why, child, what could bring you out such a night as this? Where is your home?"

"I'm Cassie Miller, sir. We live on —— street. Father has had no work for two months, and we are very poor, and it is very cold at home, sir, and sometimes we have nothing to eat. Freddie died last week, and there is nobody left but pa, ma, and me. The doctor said that Freddie died of cold and hunger, sir; but he is in heaven now, and won't know what it is to go without supper any more, and he won't need any fire up there with the angels. Poor ma has been sick a long, long time, and Freddie's death made her worse, and then pa he took to drinking, and talks about killing himself because he can't find work; and when he sees me cry for supper he kisses me and cries too, and then poor ma cries, and pa leaves the house and don't come back until near morning, and then he staggers and sleeps on the floor. To-night ma got worse, and Mrs. Longview says she won't live, and she sent me to fetch the doctor, as pa ain't home; but the doctor ain't at the office, and I don't know where he lives; and please, sir, won't you tell me where to find him?"

"That I will, my child," said Richard, for the plaintive pathos of the child's story of poverty and want moved him to the quick; "but where do you live, little one?"

"No 13 —— street, sir."

"Well, now, you can run right home, and I

will go and fetch the doctor ; I will not delay a moment."

"Oh, you are real kind, sir. I will go and hunt up pa ; I know he will come home ; he always does when I go for him," and away she ran, her little fretted heart cheered by the kind words of the stranger.

Richard stood and watched the little thing as she sped over the slippery pavement until her form mingled with the darkness of the distance. He never heard such a sad and pathetic story as this ingenuous child told in tears and sobs, and verified with her famine-pinched features and scant apparel. It appealed strongly to his sympathy and manhood.

The semi-nude child ran on unmindful of the cold, the biting, snow-laden wind that swept and howled in fearful gusts around the corners ; on through the great floods of golden light that shone through the glass fronts of shops and stores ; on through the deep darkness of lampless streets ; on through obstructed alleys grim and shadowy ; on until she came to an old dilapidated wooden building. She approached the door timidly, turned the knob slowly, and entered noiselessly. The room was quite small, the ceiling very low and slanting in two or three directions, and thus seemed to correspond to an equal number of dips or depressions in the floor. A short pine plank, one end resting on a cleat nailed to the wall and the other on an empty box, served as a sort of counter or bar, behind which stood a red-faced, frowzy, elephantine-looking woman. An old shelf containing a few broken cigar boxes and a half dozen villainous-looking bottles, a sick-looking dice-box, and an ugly-looking pistol completed the background of the scene. The room was filled with men worthy

of the place. It was also filled with noisome vapors and tobacco smoke. A dirty, smoky chintz screen served as a door to an opening leading to the back part of the building, where the family of the proprietress lived. The rough, boisterous talk, interlarded with horrid oaths and imprecations, ceased suddenly when little Cassie entered the room.

She looked around searchingly, turned her little head rapidly in all directions, and, not seeing her father, she approached the bar and said in a timid voice :

“Please ma’am, has pa been here?”

“I don’t know yer pa,” snarled the woman, in a harsh, sharp voice.

“It’s Miller’s daughter,” interposed a rough, kind voice, in answer to the woman’s look of inquiry.

“Oh, ho !” was her only answer, as she gazed with a patronizing leer at the little waif.

“Your father is at Abaddon Hall, I think,” said the man, turning to the child.

“Is it far?” she asked, looking up, while two silent tears stole down her cheeks.

“Well, my little woman, it’s a good stretch from here, and I don’t think you could find it.”

“Oh ! I must, I must !” cried the child, despairingly. “Ma is worse, and Mrs. Longview says she won’t live but a few hours.”

“If that’s the case,” said the man, “you stay here, and I will run and tell him.”

“Will you, though?”

“Of course I will, and won’t be long either,” he replied, buttoning up his coat and opening the door.

“A devil of a night,” muttered a chorus of voices, as a blast of raw, freezing air and snow swept shriekingly into the room.

Abaddon Hall was located in the basement of an old wooden building that rose two stories above the sidewalk, on the corner of Randolph and Canal streets. The place resembled a slime pit. It was filled with a humid, nauseous stench that smelled like the odor from an open sewer. The floor was covered with sawdust, saturated with liquid, viscid defilements of various kinds. A long row of short tables stretched down one side of the hall like a row of coffins in an undertaker's shop. On the opposite side, a long, outward-slanting bar extended nearly the entire length of the room. This bar was fitted up with all the modern improvements necessary to send a man down the precipitous bank of destruction with rapid velocity—send him smoothly down, keeping time with the ravishing notes of a grand concert piano, mingled with vocal symphony. The hall was well filled with people, gathered in knots on the floor or around the tables, and a large number of waiters were kept busy serving them.

A little bell tinkled at the upper end of the bar, and presently Mr. Appolyon leaned over and looked at a glass-faced register, where a little half-moon shield had dropped, disclosing a number. He pulled a bell-cord, and a gong at the far end of the hall sounded sharply. Directly, a small boy came running up to the head of the bar.

"Number eleven," said the proprietor, without looking at him.

The boy ran along the bar toward the wall, which seemed to open as he reached it, disclosing a narrow passage leading to a still narrower flight of steps. The boy struggled up two flights and came to a hall into which several rooms opened. He stopped before one and knocked.

"Come in," came from the inside. He opened

the door, and saw three men sitting around a small center-table, on which was placed a decanter of brandy and some glasses.

"Send Mr. Apollyon here," said one of the men, in a voice of alarming compass.

"And be quick about it," put in another, with sharp vehemence, and his eyes bulged out as if they would leave their sockets.

The boy left. Mr. Apollyon appeared.

"What can I do for you, gentlemen?"

"Do you know any one," said the man with retreating and advancing eyes, "who is so reduced by want and penury that employment under any conditions would be accepted?"

"I think I do," he replied, after a moment's hesitation. "He was a schoolmate," he continued, musingly, "and he has always been a believer in temperance and purity, and all that sort of thing, but lately fortune has refused to smile on him. He has been out of work since last December. His little boy died the other day and his wife is sick. I think money would be an object to him now. His troubles have already swamped his temperance notions, and I think his other notions of right and wrong would give way to a little judicious reasoning."

"Could you get him here inside of an hour?"

"I will try, Mr. Spindle, and I think I will succeed."

About an hour later the door of "No. 11" was opened again, and David Miller was shown into the room.

"Gentlemen, this is the man," said Apollyon, bowing obsequiously and smirking out of the room.

CHAPTER XXXII.

THE ABODE OF DEATH.

David Miller's face was an open page in misery's book. Suffering, trouble, want, and dissipation were plainly written there. His hair and beard were matted, shaggy, unkempt; his clothes soiled, torn, and so patched that the original material could not be detected; his boots gaped, and his hair protruded through his tattered hat like tufts of grass through knot-holes in a board walk. Altogether he presented a pitiable, miserable appearance; and yet there shone from his clear, gray eye an unmistakable ray of intelligence of a high order, and his general bearing, notwithstanding his repulsive exterior, indicated that he had seen better days.

"Be seated, sir," said Spindle, nodding familiarly toward a vacant chair, accompanying the motion of the head with a condescending wave of the hand.

"I prefer to stand. In what manner can I serve you, or for what purpose do you want me?" said Miller, glancing hungrily at the decanter of brandy.

Spindle, noticing the look and expression, rose immediately and poured out a draught of the fiery beverage, which he handed to Miller, who, with trembling hand but flashing eye, eagerly clutched the glass and drank its contents with a gulp.

"Would you like to obtain an easy, good-paying situation?" asked Spindle, nonchalantly, while replacing the decanter and glass, as if it was a matter of absolute indifference.

"Would I like to obtain a situation?" repeated

Miller, with interrogative emphasis. "Look at me," he continued, with bitter sarcasm. "Do I look like a man who needed work? If your child died before your eyes of starvation and cold, if your wife lay in the ante-chamber of death, brought thither by the same means, if your remaining child was a street beggar, if your house was a fireless hovel, if you did not know where your next meal was coming from, and if all this was the result of not having work, would you like to obtain a situation?" His voice was thick and quivered with tremulous intensity, and his eyes, though moist, flashed brightly.

"Certainly, I would!" said Spindle in a sympathetic tone, accompanied by a sad but conciliatory smile.

"Then why mock me?" snappishly retorted Miller.

"Mock you?" said Spindle, and his eyes came out with a flash, but presently retreated, and a bland, persuasive smile rippled over his sallow face, as he added:

"Pardon me, my dear sir; I had no idea of offending you—would not do so for the world. I merely asked in a sort of preliminary way. I was told by Mr. Apollyon that you needed work badly, and as I want a man very much I thought I would oblige my friend, Apollyon, who has recommended you, by offering you the position."

"And will you give me work?" asked Miller, eagerly.

"I will, sir."

"Then, God bless you!" was the fervent reply.

Spindle gave a little a start and turned just a shade paler at the mention of his Maker's name.

"But there is to be a condition," he managed to say, in a jocular manner.

"A condition ! What is it ? " asked Miller.

"A portion of your duties will be made known to you now, but you are to agree and bind yourself to perform other services, the nature of which you will only discover when the time arrives for their performance."

"Are these duties lawful and legitimate?" asked Miller, with a scared and uneasy look.

"You are to know no more, sir. You are at liberty to accept or reject the proposal. If you accept, you can begin to-morrow evening. Your duties at present will be to act as night watchman at Relvason's works ; you probably know where they are."

"I do."

"Well, do you accept? Your compensation will be liberal."

The man's cheerless home, sick wife, and helpless child rose before him like a horrid vision ; still he hesitated and seemed greatly perplexed as he gazed at some imaginary, undefined form which his morbid, oppressed mind had pictured. Yes, it was the form, the face, the features of his loved boy that was outlined on the retina of the mind's eye.

"Yes, I accept!" he gasped in a hollow whisper, still gazing fixedly, rigidly at vacancy.

"All right my man," replied Spindle quickly, with a great sigh of relief.

Allsoud also sighed as if relieved of some weighty burden ; Harvey Mellen looked on doggedly silent. Paper and pen and ink were procured, an agreement was soon drawn up, signed and witnessed, and a month's pay given Miller in advance. This concluded the conference. In descending the stairs, Harvey Mellen asked Miller if he knew Richard Arbyght.

"That I do," he answered promptly, "and a

noble fellow he is. If all workingmen were like him I would not be compelled to stultify and disgrace myself as I have done to-night."

"Be that as it may," returned Mellen in a whisper, "you must bear in mind that from henceforth you are Arbyght's mortal enemy."

They had reached the foot of the stairs and Mellen purposely slipped away and left Miller without any further explanation.

The man who came in search of him was waiting, and after a few words in a low tone, they left Abaddon Hall hurriedly.

About half an hour or so afterward Miller and his little girl approached their home. And such a home! It was simply a hut made of thin, knotty planks, even the roof being made of boards o'erlapping each other; but sun and rain had so shrunk them that they no longer served their original purpose. The same was also true of the sides and end of the hut; but over the openings that gaped widest old pieces of boards, old staves, and pieces of broken cask heads had been nailed, giving the poverty-stamped hovel a scaly appearance. There was but one window in the hut, and that consisted of a single sash which could be slid back. A single joint of stovepipe, full of rust holes, issued from the roof quite close to the eaves; from this pipe a whitish smoke was tumbling like the links of a mammoth sausage. A rickety door, hung with hinges made of the upper of an old boot, and fastened with a wooden latch, was pulled open at their approach, and Mrs. Longview admitted them and closed the door. There was no partition in the hovel; it consisted of a single room, twelve by sixteen feet. In one end was the rusty skeleton of an old worn-out stove, in the other an old-fashioned bedstead, on which was

a corn-husk mattress, an old patched coverlet, the only covering of a pale, emaciated woman, whose head rested on a straw pillow, her eyes closed, her bony hands crossed outside the coverlet. In the center of the room stood the remains of what was once a table, on which was a lighted candle stuck in a large bottle. The wind whistled and moaned dismally through hundreds of cracks and holes, threatening the extinction of the tallow flame at every blast of more than ordinary violence. The place would, in fact, afford no more shelter than a punctured tin lantern of the same size, and yet four human beings called it home.

"Dear Maggie," said Miller, "I have found work at last," and the poor fellow fairly shed tears of joy.

Mrs. Longview blew hard at the stubborn fire. Maggie did not answer.

"And, oh! pa, I'm so glad," said little Cassie, grasping her father's hand.

Mrs. Longview blew the flame still harder. David Miller took his wife's hand; it was very cold. He dropped it, and it fell back heavily upon the coverlet. Miller's eyes became fixed upon the pale, white face with a horror-stricken stare; his heart rose up in his throat; he gasped for breath, and fell back upon the floor like a log.

Maggie Miller was dead.

A moment later, Dr. Rauchman and Richard Arbyght entered the abode of death. The physician soon brought Miller back to consciousness, but he crouched upon the floor, his head between his hands, and would not speak a word. Little Cassie was kneeling by the bed, holding the hand of her dead mother, and crying piteously. Mrs. Longview was still battling with the fire, but tears were coursing down her wrinkled cheeks.

"The misery of this place is too sacred for intrusion ; we can do nothing here," said the doctor, preparing to leave.

The words were spoken to Richard, but the speaker seemed disposed to linger and let his companion go out first, while the latter seemed disposed to do the same thing. Finally, Arbyght caught the doctor's eye—they understood each other at once, and, advancing to the table, they each placed on it some bank-notes, and put the improvised candlestick upon them to prevent the gusts of wind from carrying them away. Although Miller appeared entirely oblivious, he nevertheless saw the act, and remembered it long afterward.

"Is it possible that such wretchedness as we have just witnessed is common in this city, or is this an isolated case?" said Richard, in a musing tone of inquiry, after they had again reached the street.

"Possible?" gruffly replied the doctor, "it is not possibility, sir, it is fact. An isolated case, indeed ! Why, man, there are hundreds of such cases to be seen every day in this city."

"And, still, we are told that the laborer has nothing of which to complain ; that work is plenty and wages remunerative. Truly, I fail to comprehend it."

"Not comprehend it?" repeated the doctor. "Nonsense, man, it is plain as day. Do you see that magnificent residence across the avenue?"

"I do."

"A few years ago the owner was a penniless vagabond."

"He must be a lucky fellow."

"Lucky? No, he is a shrewd man though. He is an employer of labor. He first worked on borrowed capital, but he made his workmen pay

the interest and a large margin beside. Now, as he began with nothing and ends a millionaire, it is fair to presume that his employés made his money, or rather, they made the money and he took it. Most people say it is business tact and enterprise that made him rich, but is it not queer that this same tact and enterprise can't make one man rich without making hundreds poor?"

"That's just it," broke in Richard, "and if these men who made this money had a rightful share of it there would be fewer such scenes as we have this night witnessed."

"There, now, you comprehend it, I see; but I am home," replied the doctor, "and I must bid you good-night."

"Good-night," responded Richard, as he walked down the avenue at a rapid pace.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

A RIFT IN THE CLOUD.

It was in the month of March that Vida and her father left for New Orleans. Raw, gusty, boisterous March weather—mud, churned and kneaded by hundreds of vehicles, horses, and pedestrians one day, and the next day rough, jagged, frozen streets; to-day, cold, drizzling rain, dense atmosphere, mud-splashed, mire-coated horses, bedraggled garments, and general discomfort—tomorrow, cold, piercing wind, slippery walks, and impassable thoroughfares. Such is March weather in the Central States.

Vida was at first glad to leave the city, as, lately, life had been unbearable in it; but she soon found that thwarted love made life an unecheered gloom to the spirit, no matter where the body might be.

It was at first a pleasing relief to both mind and body to pass rapidly from the variable, disagreeable climate of the North to the genial warmth of the sunny South. As the train approached the "Crescent City" evidences of a tropical land met her eye on every hand. The fields were green and velvety, the trees were luxuriant in the bloom and foliage of spring, the farms were being tilled, and the soft, balmy winds of the tropics fanned her cheeks on their way northward.

Closer to the city, they passed through vast swamps, dense with tall trees, from which hung in waving festoons a whitish-gray moss, that made them look like bearded giants; alligators could be seen sunning themselves on old logs and on the banks of stagnant pools. The wild weirdness of the scene formed a unique framework for the gay, voluptuous, swamp-girded city of the Gulf.

The appearance of New Orleans was also a novelty to Vida. Its European characteristics; the quaint French quarter; narrow streets; antique houses; gardens enclosed by high walls; curious tile roofs, eaves toward the street; board blinds, and doors opening right on the banquettes; the variety of people; their strange costumes; the cosmopolitan sociality of the city; the strange phenomena of the water running from the river and not toward it, and the apparent rising of the sun in the west, were topics for comment and surprise for a few days. And, as her mind was busily employed in the contemplation of these things, it served to separate her soul from its great sorrow, and she actually seemed to slowly recover.

But this did not last long, the novelty of the strange sights and scenery soon wore away, and then the reaction left her in a far worse state than before. "This seems to be true of all mortals who seek to bury the past in the maddening whirl of evanescent joys. No matter how often we inter the corpse of a bitter past in the grave of pleasure, its ghost will rise and haunt us with greater terror and more mocking fury.

Vida was taken suddenly ill.

An eminent physician was called in, and after an examination, and a reportorial questioning of the father, he began to talk of cerebral excitement and nervous derangement, but gave no definite opinion on the case. It is extremely doubtful whether he understood anything about it. Mr. Geldamo arrived at that conclusion, and to expedite matters, he gave the physician a confidential history of the whole affair.

After listening attentively, the famed Esculapius adjusted his glasses, and coolly and deliberately informed Mr. Geldamo that it was a hopeless case as far as material medical aid was concerned.

"Nothing," he said, "but the immediate presence of Arbygth could effect a cure."

This was bitter and unpalatable news for the father. He pondered, and studied, and thought it over a long time. At last he came to a conclusion, which was somewhat hastened by the fact that Vida was growing worse each succeeding hour. He telegraphed for Arbygth to come at once, and Richard obeyed the summons and came on without delay.

He arrived in the city without any knowledge of its hotel accommodations, and when a long string of hotels were shrieked at him by a chorus of porters, he haphazardly selected the St. Charles,

and was soon 'neath the shadow of that famous hostelry. He passed through the vestibule, up one of the broad flight of steps that led to the office, and was soon registered and shown to his room. In passing along a spacious hall he noticed the door of a suite of rooms slightly ajar, but not heeding it, passed on.

"Richard! Richard!"

Stop, man, you are called.

"Richard! Richard!"

Are you deaf? Do you not hear? Do you not recognize the voice? Yes; he knew it well, and stood for a moment rooted to the spot and listened to the faint, thick, incoherent mutterings that issued from the room. Presently the door opened wider, and Mr. Geldamo stood on the threshold looking haggard and worn. Seeing Arbyght, he bowed coldly, and invited him in.

He followed the father into the chamber, advanced to the bedside, sat down, and groaned aloud; and as he took in his own the little white, wasted hand that lay on the white counterpane of the bed, tears filled his eyes.

Although the father's heart was bitter and festering with impotent rage, still, he was moved not a little by this manifestation of Arbyght's deep and genuine devotion for his daughter.

The listless hand remained in Richard's tender grasp for some time, but it thrilled to his touch no more.

The physician came shortly afterward, and left a prescription. When questioned, he said there was no sign of a break in the fever, and it might be days before anything definite could be promised. After he left, Arbyght sat long and gazed sadly at the partly closed eyes, the parched lips, the burning cheeks, and the hollow temples and beautifully-

moulded white forehead of the fevered-racked sufferer.

For five days he was almost constantly by the bedside. The physician came often, but, for the first four days, could detect no change for the better, although Arbyght was positive such a change had taken place. On the fifth day the physician said there was a perceptible change, and he was glad to say it was for the better—that the fever might break at any time. This result he attributed to the last prescription, which he said was very efficacious—almost infallibly so.

Yes, very efficacious indeed! The good doctor did not wish to admit, although he knew it, that his medicine had a powerful aid in Arbyght, whose continual presence in the room assisted nature in her battle against the fever. That hand, which clasped hers so often and so long, would, were she in health, send thrilling currents to her soul; nor was it wholly powerless now as a remedial agent. And then, his great amount of nervous force, power, and vitality, a portion of which was communicated to her by every touch of the hand, every gentle pressure on the forehead, served nature in the struggle. And again, the magnetic influence that united, surrounded their souls—made them one in responsive unison, acted strongly on each by continual proximation—and he, being healthy, vigorous, strong, slowly, imperceptibly, but surely imparted to her a portion of his own physical nature. Add to this the soothing effect his presence undoubtedly had on her spirit, even though unconscious, and is it any wonder the doctor's medicine proved efficacious?

Next morning, when the father entered the room, he found Vida sleeping quietly and breath-

ing easily, with a very remarkable change in her features. Richard was by her bedside.

"The worst is past!" he whispered, bending over the bed, and gazing intently at the sleeper.

"It is," responded Richard, and before any further conversation could be had, the Creole nurse drove them both out of the room for daring to speak at that juncture.

That afternoon, as the western sun was streaming through the Venetian blinds, Vida woke up, restored to reason and free from fever. At first, she gazed around in a sort of dreamy vacancy; finally, her eyes rested upon a figure, whose back was toward her, and who was apparently watching some object in the street below.

"Papa, I feel better now. I must have had a good sleep, and, oh, papa, I dreamed that he was here."

The figure at the window turned quickly around and advanced toward the bed, and said tenderly:

"Dear Vida, he is here."

She uttered no exclamation—spoke not a word. She lifted her emaciated hands, looked steadily at him with mild, sorrowing eyes, her bosom rose, and respiration seemed temporarily checked. He took the outstretched hands, pressed them tenderly, and then bent over and kissed her cheek wondrously softly for a man. Her fingers closed lightly on his hands, and gently drawing him toward her, she kissed him for the first time, while she whispered softly:

"The world is bright again."

All of Arbyght's sorrows, the past of his dark, cheerless life seemed blotted out—atoned for, by that first kiss of love, which was to him as sacred as an angel's touch. His eyes grew moist, he quivered in every fiber, his heart seemed a spring:

of ethereal fire that flooded every artery and vein with currents of celestial heat.

"When did you arrive?" she asked after he sat down beside her.

"A week ago."

"A week ago?" she repeated, incredulously, "and where have you been all the time?" she continued, reprovingly.

"You have been very ill," he answered, soothingly, "and have been unconscious nearly two weeks. I have been here ever since I came to the city; but, there now, you must not talk any more to-day, to-morrow you will be stronger."

Again she gazed at him with those mild, swimming eyes, long and earnestly, then closed them slowly, and dropped into a peaceful slumber; and from that hour she gained physical strength so rapidly that the physician pronounced her out of danger three days afterward.

Then Mr. Geldamo began to plot and carry out the scheme he had formed when he concluded to send for Arbygth. He told Richard he had long contemplated a European tour, and now he thought Vida would be benefited very materially by the change of air and the new and varied scenery of the old world.

"I shall be absent one year," he said, "and perhaps more, but, if by the time we return you can give me the assurance that you are in a position to give Vida a home equal to her station in life, then I will interpose no obstacle in the way of your union; but, in the mean time, I desire that there shall be no formal betrothal. I simply ask you to prove your capability to make a home, and after that all the assistance you require will be furnished."

Richard felt sure of ultimate success as his pros-

pects in Chicago were bright and flattering, but still he feared that the banker was only fighting to gain time. However, he thanked him, and assured him that he would endeavor to prove capable of caring for the woman he loved, and accepted the conditions imposed.

To Vida her father related his conversation with Richard—not substantially as it occurred, for he added much to brighten the picture. He told her she could love the workman as much as she pleased, and after they returned to Chicago, if he had proved himself worthy and capable of caring for her, they should be speedily married.

Under these circumstances the lovers felt confident and cheerful, and their parting was less painful than it otherwise would have been, as they both determined to do their duty—Richard to love and labor; Vida to love, pray, and wait.

Richard returned to Chicago, and the next ocean steamer carried Vida and her father to the Old World.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

RELVASON GIVES A DINNER.

A dinner party. Very few people appreciate the importance of dinners—none overestimate it. It is said that Napoleon, because of having dined too hurriedly lost the battles of Barodino and Leipsic. This is certainly a fearful warning to men in whose keeping the destinies of nations and states have been confided. These persons should take more

time, and should not forget that not only material, but intellectual life and vigor depend on good digestion. With poor, insignificant toilers, who are oftentimes required to swallow their dinners in bulk, it does not make so much difference. No weighty problems of state require solution at their hands; no intricate plans of campaigns or strategical, offensive and defensive movements are mapped out by them. Then what difference does it make whether they digest their dinners properly or not? None whatever. Their mission is toil, unceasing toil, and if they do become dyspeptic, and if the race deteriorates, degenerates, dies out, what of it?

The deterioration of labor lessens production, lessens wealth. Yet, so great is the desire to amass fortunes in the present generation that the future is left to take care of itself.

But modern dinners in high life are a great institution. Financial projects are matured, banks and railroads projected, and other schemes concocted during the post-prandial wine drinking. Official patronage, love, intrigue, politics are discussed, friendships formed, and schemes of power, fame, and ambition hatched at the dinner table. So it will be seen that the significance and importance attaching to these gatherings can not be well over-estimated.

Alvan Relvason was thoroughly posted on the efficacy of dinners as a social and business lever, and had determined to give a dinner party that would eclipse anything of the kind yet attempted by the *parvenu elite*. Invitations were sent to all the potentates of the business and social world in which he moved, and were all, of course, unequivocally accepted, for if there is anything your modern capitalist of the Relvason type really en-

joys, it is a good dinner. Especially is this true of the uncultured capitalist. Money never files off the edge of his appetite, and what he may lack in knowledge of the delicate refinements of the dinner table he makes up in executive capacity.

In making up this dinner party Relvason did not follow the rule of Brillat-Savarin, that in numbers it should not be less than the Graces nor more than the Muses. He acted on the principle that if a small party was an enjoyable affair a large one was proportionally more so ; and besides, he was a man who believed the more noise he made in the world the greater would be his claim to fame and popularity.

The prandial day arrived, and in the afternoon little knots of gamins and grown persons of both sexes began to congregate on the corners in the vicinity and opposite the Relvason mansion. They assembled through mere curiosity, or because of that morbid desire to see something out of the ordinary course of events that seems to inhere so strangely in humanity. They did not dream that they were paying homage to wealth, and yet, in a certain sense, they were. The gaudy and glittering carriages, the liveried servants, the costly toilets of the occupants of the carriages were all wonderful sights to the impromptu audience. Even the delicate, velvety carpet that extended from the curbstone into the great hall, in order that the dainty shoes of the ladies, and the small shoes, distorted by the ungainly feet of the gentlemen, might not be soiled, came in for a share of the open-mouthed admiration. And yet these capital-worshipers never dreamed that the money thus foolishly expended on show and the gewgaws and frivolity of ever-changing fashion, came directly from the proceeds of their own toil.

All the guests having arrived, dinner was announced, and the host rising gave his arm to Mrs. Shorelake, a visitor from New York, and bowing to the company, led the way to the dining-room. He was followed by Mr. Stockbank and lady, Hon. S. Kingmine and lady, Hon. A. Legallaw and lady, Mr. M. D. Squills and lady, Mr. H. Packer and lady, Mr. Bishop and lady, and other Hons. and Messrs. of lesser note, the rear being brought up by the hostess and Mr. R. Mills.

The dining-room was a noble apartment. Its ceiling was paneled with oak, in designs where the culture of the artist and the skill of the artisan were alike called into service in its exquisite detail and execution. A paneled wainscoting of the same wood and matching the design of the ceiling, girded the room, and the walls were tinted in harmony. The floor was laid in alternate strips of oak and ash finished in oil, encircled by a beautifully patterned border of the same woods; and upon the floor were spread rare rugs, that were fashioned in Turkish looms. Extending through the center of the room was the table. With its wealth of solid silver, Sevres, Venetian glass of antique form, queer old vases, worth their weight in gold, filled with rare flowers whose delicate perfume burdened the air, it was a fit setting for so costly a frame. Over it all shone the mellow light from low-burning gas jets shaded by stained glass globes. While the appointments of the table could not be termed the perfection of refined elegance, they were the sumptuous results of a lavish expenditure of money. There was withal a sort of untouchable immaculateness about the whole arrangement, suggestive of newness, a reminder that, as far as the host and hostess were concerned, all that they were able to produce was simply the

results to be obtained by any one who has an unlimited amount of money to spend.

The dinner was served up *a la Russe*, nearly every guest being attended by a waiter; a decided improvement on the old fashion of serving dinners, as it is really perplexing to a man to see all of his food before him and have to carve, help others and talk and eat at the same time. The old style was cumbersome and besides it suggested the idea of work, and hence *a la Russe*, "the poetry of dining," came into universal fashion with those who think labor ignoble. At a dinner served in this manner no viands or dishes appear on the table, but at a given signal dish after dish, and course after course follow in quick succession, and the gourmand has nothing to do but to eat, drink, and be merry.

At this dinner party there was a noticeable absence of persons of refinement and culture.

"Have you heard of these trade-unions?" queried Relvason of Mrs. R. Mills.

"No, I thank you, I don't wish for any; I have a perfect horror of strange dishes; for one, I always want to know what I'm eating."

"Why, my dear," said Mr. Mills, looking up, and giving his knife a chance to rest, "they are revolutionists."

"Oh, my sakes! another war, when did it begin?" exclaimed Mrs. Mills in alarm.

"My dear, there is no war," mildly answered her spouse, "do not permit yourself to be alarmed. These trade-unionists are working people, who engage in strikes."

"Well I hope they won't strike each other very hard," replied Mrs. Mills in a relieved tone, "if there is anything I hate, it is fighting; it's so horribly vulgar, you know."

"Between his anxiety to put his better half on

the right track on the trade-union topic, and a desire to finish his dinner, Mr. Mills began to perspire, which necessitated a vigorous mopping of his face, which he performed with his napkin, and then tucked a corner of it between his collar and neck and made an improvised bib of it; after which he closed the argument by saying :

"I see, my dear, that you never heard of these troublesome fellows ; well, they ain't worth bothering one's head about any way."

"These people are becoming unusually audacious, I believe," said Mr. H. Packer, as he adjusted his napkin in a button-hole of his coat.

"They are indeed," replied Relvason.

"Why don't you arrest and punish them?" asked Mrs. Shorelake.

"Oh! they don't directly violate any law," said Mr. R. Mills, desisting a moment from a vigorous attack on the edibles.

"But they murder law and order like Falstaff murdered sleep," persisted Mrs. Shorelake.

"She means Macduff," whispered Mrs. Legal-law to her lord.

"Macbeth, my dear, Macbeth," he replied in an undertone.

"But what do they want, any how?" said Mrs. H. Packer.

"More wages, less hours of work, more home comforts, education, respectability, and I don't know what not," remarked Hon. S. Kingmine, who found time at this juncture to mop his face with his napkin and take a hand in the conversation.

"Well, I should like to know! Why, what possible use could they make of these things? Of what benefit is learning to working people, any way?" said Mrs. H. Packer in a tone that

conveyed the idea that she had presented an unanswerable and conclusive argument, from whose inexorable logic there could be no appeal; and she looked around for an emphatic approval.

"They are very selfish, unreasonable creatures," said Mr. H. Packer, finding time to make a brief remark by way of resting from the arduous, and to him, important work of eating and drinking, and then added, "When I first went into the butchering business, I had no money worth mentioning, but I done remarkably well, and doubled, and even trebled my little capital every year, and would you believe it, just as I was about getting a good start, my men were unreasonable enough to demand more wages. You see they have no heart; I would not care so much now, but at that time it was so ungrateful in them to try to set me back."

"Every one of them ought to be guillotined," remarked Mrs. S. Kingmine.

Mrs. Legallaw looked at her husband and smiled.

"Guillotined, my dear," he whispered in an undertone.

"If we had a Robespierre like they had in Italy, the country would soon be rid of them," continued Mrs. Kingmine.

"France, my dear Mrs. Kingmine, was the scene of Robespierre's actions, I believe," suggested Mr. Legallaw.

"Oh, it don't make any difference," said she, "France and Italy are one, the Rocky mountains are the only barrier between them."

"The Alps," whispered Mrs. Legallaw, giving her lord a nudge.

"Yes, my dear," he replied with an approving smile.

"What we need is a strong government that will put down these strikers and teach them to know their place," said Mr. H. Packer.

"I think it would be well to be a little conservative on the strong government proposition," interrupted Mr. Legallaw in a mild manner, "the fact is, that however necessary you and I may deem it, Mr. Packer," with a deprecatory wave of the hand, "the masses are not, perhaps, in a condition that will warrant an open advocacy of such a system."

"You are right, Mr. Legallaw," said Mr. Squills.

"It would be better for all of us to have a strong government," persisted Mr. Packer, "for we have too much freedom in this country, when men, who are depending on us for work, are at liberty to combine and set themselves up as our equals."

The dinner lasted a long time, but finally came to an end. The ladies rose and swept grandly out of the room, leaving the gentlemen to sip their wine; and they sipped, and drank, and toasted success to capitalists, confusion to unions and punishment and disgrace to their leaders. They drank quite freely, Relvason especially. At last his head inclined on his breast, and his eyes seemed closed. Presently he sprang to his feet, overturning his chair, and came near doing the same with the table.

"It's a lie, a lie!" he roared, as he clutched desperately at the air, his teeth set, and his eyes glaring like a tiger's; "it's mine, I made it all honestly, legitimately—all mine," and his limbs became rigid, his tongue refused to move, and with a gasping, gurgling sound he fell heavily forward on the table.

All was now confusion and excitement. The

ladies rushed into the room and were about to scream, but Mr. M. D. Squills waved them back, and said it was nothing but a slight attack of mania-a-potu.

"Oh, no, it is not that," exclaimed Mrs. Relvason, "it's a sort of fit that comes on very suddenly."

The stricken man fairly bounded on the floor, beat the air with his hands, and kicked furiously. Three or four of the men held him firmly. They tried to unbutton his collar, but his neck was so swollen that the collar seemed as tight as a hoop on a cask, and it was only by main force that it was torn off. After this the man's struggles became less violent, his face began to whiten, his pulse sank, and soon he lay motionless on the floor, whence he was carried to his room. The guests departed expeditiously, and left the great mansion to its conscience-raked owner and terror-stricken family.

Relvason was not seen again for a week.

* * * * *

The long, dreary winter was slowly passing away, dissolving into the ethereal mildness of spring, like the gray dawn when night begins to open into day. Arbygth had returned from New Orleans and was actively, energetically at work. The union in the mean time was determinedly fighting an unseen enemy. Whenever it was ascertained that a man had become prominent or held an office in the organization he was marked immediately, and discharged upon the slightest provocation. No man was discharged because of his connection with the union. Oh! no; but men were discharged for mildly remonstrating against insulting remarks from the foremen, and even employers, and whenever a man was discharged he

had to soon leave the city or turn his attention to something else. A fearful amount of misery and suffering was the result, but the men bore it heroically, with very few exceptions. Some there were, who, driven by famine and want, denied they were union men, and thus got back to work. Any person from outside seeking work was closely questioned, and if found to be tainted with unionism was invariably refused employment. These and other mean devices were resorted to for the purpose of breaking the spirit of the men.

It was the general feeling among the employers that a reduction of wages should be enforced early in the spring, but their last experience with the union convinced them that trouble was likely to occur unless that body was destroyed. Here then was the motive for all these little petty acts of meanness, persecution and tyranny; money and self were at the bottom of it. They dreaded a severance of the relations between them and the men, though they were resolved upon a reduction regardless of the consequences, if it could not be peaceably accomplished. This little ring of employers reasoned after this fashion: by reducing the men's wages half a dollar per diem the men would not feel it, while it would aggregate for them the net sum of two hundred thousand dollars at the end of the year, which would be a snug little amount to divide among a few men—giving them from ten to thirty thousand dollars each—and they certainly could take better care of it than the improvident workmen. It never occurred to them that this half dollar might actually be needed to furnish bread for some little mouth.

The crisis came shortly after the Relvason dinner party, and was probably hastened by that event, as the dinner, dresses, jewelry and other items,

cost not less than ten thousand dollars; and the magnitude of the bills that came pouring in alarmed, maddened, lacerated Relvason's miserly soul and he determined that the gap in his bank account should be speedily filled. With that end in view, he urged the reduction of wages more strongly than ever, and at length the other employers yielded and the strike against the men was instituted.

Notice of the new scale of prices was given to the men and they, as a matter of course, refused to work on the new schedule. They were ordered to leave the shops and they complied instantly. The employers now found that all their despicable machinations amounted to nothing as the men stood firmly together.

Nearly all the daily papers sided with the employers, whom they considered the victims of a horrible conspiracy. Long articles from them appeared daily, and when the workingmen desired to respond, the reply would only be inserted at advertising rates, or not inserted at all. Fortunately for the cause of humanity, many of the great papers of to-day are the staunchest advocates of the rights of labor. This is the most striking illustration of the growth of public opinion upon this question, and it is mainly due to the power of organized effort. But at the time of which we write, it was different, and workingmen were unable to reach the public ear. From the open and covert tone of the press, it was generally believed that the men had struck for an advance. The real facts of the case were distorted and twisted—shaped to throw odium upon the men and lead the public to believe that the employers were being badly treated.

One afternoon a non-union man working for Relvason came out of the shop into the street on

an errand of some nature, and as he passed through the gate he met a large number of children returning from school. Among them was the son, a mere child, of one of the locked-out workmen. The little fellow made some remark which the non-union man thought reflected on himself, and seizing the child by the hair he began beating him unmercifully ; and, as a matter of course, he began to cry and scream loudly. The noise attracted the attention of some men who were just then crossing the street, a block further up, among whom was the father of the boy in question. Seeing his child abused, he rushed to the rescue and dealt the cowardly brute some well-deserved punishment.

As is usual in such cases, a large crowd quickly assembled. Relvason jumped into his buggy and was soon at police headquarters, where he represented the workmen as having made an attack upon his shop in vast numbers. The mayor was summoned and all the available force was ordered out, even merchant police and citizens being pressed into the ranks.

Two hours afterward a little army of over three hundred policemen and others marched grandly up to the scene of the recent encounter. They found the place silent and deserted. The deputy superintendent in charge of this formidable army then divided it into squads, which he placed under the command of sergeants and sent them into different parts of the city with orders to arrest every man supposed to have been present at the time of the difficulty. About fifty workmen spent that night in the station-houses of the city. They were discharged the following day, as nothing could be found against them ; but no recompense was made for the gross wrong inflicted upon them

as citizens. The police department was not even censured. This little episode created great excitement, and the press was frantic. Some wanted the mayor to issue a proclamation, others wanted the governor to issue a proclamation and call out the State militia, and some even went so far as to call upon the President to send United States troops to crush the spirit of the insubordination that threatened the city with destruction. But notwithstanding all these things, the men firmly refused to go to work except at the former price, and the probabilities seemed to indicate that in the end they would be successful.

The employers changed front. They proposed arbitration and the men accepted the proposal. A board of arbitration was formed, met, discussed the matter, adjourned, met again, and adjourned to meet again, met again—no agreement. The employers proposed that Arbyght should be removed from the board of arbitration; the men refused, and the scheme failed. It could not succeed, as each party entered into the arrangement fully resolved not to concede anything.

At this time there were mutterings of trouble in other branches of labor, growing out of a general disposition on the part of employers to put the price of labor down to the lowest possible point, and an attempt to do so seemed likely to bring on a general strike. The feeling of the workmen at large was most aptly illustrated by Tom Castaway. This social Ishmaelite had evidently studied the question of work and wages more closely than most men, and in a conversation with some of the more thoughtful and influential of his fellow-workmen said:

“I tell you, boys, whenever wages are reduced, whenever the producing power of labor is weak-

ened, the price of the necessities of life—what we eat, drink, and wear, as well as rents—do not come down to the same level. Wages once reduced are seldom, if ever, advanced; it is usually impossible to secure an adjustment of the price of labor once reduced so as to even average an approximation with the cost of living; this evil is as old as the hills; it has been the great cause of all the conflicts between labor and capital: the former seeking an amelioration of unfair conditions, and the latter bound to keep all it has and get all it can. I suppose this fight will continue until capitalists figure self interest by a broader and wiser rule than the one old Relvason and others like him take for a text. In the mean time the face-grinding, nose-sharpening process will go on and the poor will become poorer and the rich richer. If labor's millenium ever comes, it will be largely due to an intelligent and united action among workingmen, seeking only for a proper adjustment of the relations between employed and employer. We are learning our primer lesson now. This is an 'irrepressible conflict,' and we must take our schooling whether we get a degree or not."

"Yes," said Arbyght, who was present, "when capitalists learn that cheap men are dangerous as well as non-productive, and intelligent labor means greater industrial prosperity as well as greater security to the state, you will have advanced so far in your studies as to be ready to graduate."

"True," replied Castaway, "and candor compels me to admit that if we are wise, prudent and patient, capitalists will learn this lesson much sooner than if we act hastily and indiscreetly. Our demands must be just, be fairly presented and enforced only by such means as the law will permit and the good sense of the general public sustain."

CHAPTER XXXV.

A STRUGGLE FOR BREAD.

Upon one of the principal streets in the very heart of the great city stood a large, massive stone building occupying a whole square, the cornices of its columned front being nearly one hundred feet above the pavement. This building was owned and occupied by several railway companies.

In one of the offices on the third floor sat two gentlemen chatting and smoking. In decoration, furniture, and artistic finish the room resembled more the *salon* of a French nobleman in Paris—that center of voluptuous luxury—than it did a business office.

The elder of the two gentlemen was a man rather below medium stature, heavy, robust, and well formed. His features were clean-cut and strong. His forehead high, large and prominent; a pair of piercing steel-gray eyes, more than half hidden by projecting shaggy eyebrows; a massive head, partially bald, and a close-cropped, fierce-looking gray mustache, completes the description of a celebrated railway magnate and corporation lawyer. His head, face and mouth were indicative of intellectual strength and power.

“My young friend, you are entirely wrong in your opinions on the question of watering stocks; you don’t fully or clearly comprehend the matter.”

“Why, Judge,” replied the younger of the two gentlemen, “is it not true that corporations frequently pay dividends on stock representing twice the actual cost of the plant?”

“Certainly.”

"Then the stock must be watered."

"Apparently, yes ; in reality, no."

"But really, Judge, I do not understand."

"Of course, you don't, because you have not given the subject any consideration. Let me explain," taking a sheet of paper upon which, with a pencil, he drew a straight line between two imaginary points, representing mythical cities. "Suppose now," he continued, "you build a road between these two cities, costing, including rolling stock, ten millions of dollars ; when you begin to operate your line it is essentially necessary that you set aside a portion of the earnings as a construction fund ; with this fund, as business increases, you construct additional terminal facilities, increase your rolling stock, build, as necessity requires, additional depots, shops, side-tracks, switches, and, perhaps, short branches. Now, if at the end of a few years you find your road worth twenty million dollars, and you issue an additional ten million dollars' worth of stock, how can it be said the stock is watered, when it simply represents the actual cash value of your property?"

"But, Judge, as you admit that these improvements, which have doubled the value of the property, were paid for from the earnings of the road, no additional capital having been invested, why not pay fourteen per cent. dividend on the actual investment of ten million dollars rather than pay seven per cent. on a watered stock of twenty million dollars?"

"Why, my dear fellow, the people would never stand that. If it became known that a railroad company was paying a dividend of fourteen per cent. shippers would begin to clamor for cheaper freights, and legislatures would be enacting laws reducing passenger rates."

"Oh ! I see," replied the judge's companion, and the discussion ended.

The managers of the great trunk-lines centering in Chicago found themselves in a dilemma. They had watered their stocks beyond the earning capacity of the several roads to pay regular dividends. A joint meeting of the directors of the leading lines was called to counsel upon the situation, which had become alarmingly critical. If the next semi-annual dividend was not paid, Wall Street would speak, and colossal fortunes based upon watered stocks would exist as a remembrance only of shattered and sunken hopes. The result of the meeting was the promulgation of an order, subjecting the salaries of all inferior officers and the wages of all employ  s to a horizontal reduction of twenty per cent.

The issuance of this order created intense excitement among those affected by it. The wages of railroad employ  s had been steadily reduced since the great civil war, until they had reached a point below which they could not be pushed without entailing dire distress and hardship.

The reduction in wages had not been accompanied by a comparative decrease in the cost of living. It is a noticeable, marked historical fact that when wages advance the cost of living advances in the same ratio ; but when wages fall, the cost of living does not comparatively decrease.

When the men first heard the order they were astonished and dismayed, and performed their work in gloomy silence. They instinctively came together in little groups of twos and threes, and earnestly discussed the matter. That evening those who belonged to labor organizations met at their respective halls. The following evening those who did not belong to labor associations met,

pursuant to a call, at Arbiter Hall, and effected a temporary organization.

The men at Rock Island held meetings also. Delegates were appointed by the various organized and unorganized bodies to form a central or governing assembly. This assembly met and appointed a committee to wait upon the parties who had issued the order; but these gentlemen, whether presidents or superintendents, refused to even see the committee.

The morning of the day the reduction was to go into effect dawned bright and clear, but there was an ominous stillness in the air. The depots were crowded with passengers desirous of leaving the city, but neither cars, engines, engineers, conductors, or brakemen appeared. Anxious travelers inquired of the ticket agents and of each other the cause of the delay, but no satisfactory information could be obtained. The great railway strike was fairly inaugurated. Trains arrived as usual during the day, but the cars were quickly switched on to side-tracks, the engines run into the round-houses, the fires dumped, and the engines, after being carefully cleaned and oiled, were abandoned. Long lines of freight cars remained unloaded upon the tracks; the movement of freight was suspended, while travel to or from the city practically ceased. No trains were permitted to depart, except one train on each road daily to carry the mails.

Small patrols of the strikers could be seen in the depots and yards and in the vicinity of the shops. Any attempt at lawlessness or disturbance was promptly checked by the patrols. The day wore peacefully and quietly away. The orderly manner in which the strike was being conducted won public sympathy, while it dismayed the railroad magnates, who were in secret consultation during the afternoon.

The evening papers referred to the strike as an important news item, and the editorial comment was unbiased and fair. The result of the consultation, or meeting, of the railway managers became apparent to the close observer the following morning. The leading morning papers, in large, flaming head-lines, and columns of leaded type, contained lurid and exaggerated accounts of the great strike. Striking, realistic, and graphic descriptions of scenes that never occurred were given with a minuteness of detail truly startling.

The shops and round-houses at Rock Island, a few miles from the city, where some two thousand of the strikers lived, it was claimed were in danger of being destroyed, together with all the property of the company, including engines there located. Another account said these two thousand workmen, well armed with rifles, were about to march upon the city. The citizens were notified that a dangerous mob of constantly increasing magnitude was about to take possession of the city, and that property, and even life, was in imminent danger. The police, it was claimed, were wholly inadequate to the emergency, and the mayor was called upon to order out all the available militia in the city, and request the governor to send troops from other parts of the State.

This movement had the effect its designers desired. It exasperated the strikers and alarmed the citizens. The central committee of the strikers held a meeting early in the day, and prepared a clear, lucid, and truthful statement of the situation. This statement many of the papers refused to publish except as an advertisement. However, its appearance did not allay the excitement and alarm. Falsehood had twenty-four hours the start of truth, and increased the lead and widened the gap as the

days rolled by. "Truth was crushed to earth," and, though the workmen had an abiding faith that in the "eternal years of God" she would rise again, yet it became painfully apparent that the resurrection would not occur in time to be of service to them.

As the days wore away the excitement grew more and more intense. The distorted accounts of the press created consternation among merchants and owners of property—unrest, rancor, and bitterness in the hearts of the strikers. The plan of the stock-waterers was working admirably. Thieves and thugs in other cities accepted the invitation to riot, robbery, and pillage which the Chicago newspapers predicted, and began to flock to the city in large numbers.

During all the scenes of excitement, and notwithstanding all the abuse, vituperation, and falsehood heaped upon them, the strikers remained firm, calm, and peaceable. The companies engaged such other men as they could secure to take the place of the striking workmen, but these men were generally induced to quit work by committees from the labor organizations.

The companies then adopted the plan of feeding and housing their new employés in large buildings, and marching them to the depots, yards, and shops under a strong escort of the metropolitan police; who remained with them during the day, and then escorted them back to their quarters in the evening.

These morning and evening parades attracted to the streets through which the escort marched large crowds of men, women and children. The women and children on these occasions loudly stigmatized with terms of derision and opprobrium the guarded workmen. These episodes sometimes resulted in

disturbances, during which many unjust and illegal arrests were made.

The strikers did more than the police to preserve order. Their patrols were everywhere, and by firm, determined bearing, and action when necessary, materially aided the authorities in maintaining the public peace.

But the crisis was fast approaching. The companies though they succeeded in securing a limited number of laborers could not fill the places of the skilled workmen, and as no break could be made in the ranks of the strikers something had to be done and done quickly.

Agents were sent to distant cities, and to Canada, and instructed to offer extraordinary inducements to skilled workmen to go to Chicago. The strikers anticipated this movement by having prepared and sent to all the leading cities of the country a pamphlet, giving a history of the present difficulty, as well as an account of a former attempt to bring skilled laborers to Chicago under similar circumstances. From the facts given in this pamphlet the author weaves the following incident because of its pertinency to this narrative.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

TRUTH STRANGER THAN FICTION.

In a beautiful valley in central Massachusetts, through which coursed a narrow river, was located one of those small but thriving manufacturing towns for which the old "Bay State" is so widely noted.

Chintsville had a neat and fresh, though not very compact appearance. It resembled more a suburban village attached to some large city, than a town having a government of its own. There were very few large or massive buildings to be seen except the large brick mills which loomed up in the center of the town, and threw long shadows across the tidy, upretentious snow-white cottages scattered irregularly over the valley. Attached to all these cottages were large well-kept gardens abounding in flowers, and surrounded by larches and hemlocks whose perennial greenness relieved the monotonous whiteness of the dwellings of the Chintsvillians. The hillsides rising above the valley were dotted like the plain, with the same evidence of a quiet, peaceful, and thrifty life. Beyond the hilltops, extensive pinebarrens stretched off toward the horizon, millions of whose dark-green, coniferous tops, visible from the valley, were burnished with the golden rays of the setting sun.

Several of the largest mills in the town were owned by Mr. Hurk, a man whose whole life had been spent in the accumulation of money—a man whose face, voice, heart, look, and gesture were cold, hard, and repellant. Though wearing the human form, he was never known to betray any evidence of heart or soul. Encased in a morose and frozen individuality, he groped his way through the world regardless of everything which he could not convert into money.

It is pay-day at one of Hurk's mills, and pale-faced men, wan, bloodless-faced women, and chalk-faced children are continually dropping into the office, where they receive a sealed envelope containing their monthly windfall, after which they drop back again into the confusing din of the mill.

Anon, there comes in a man more interesting than any who have preceded him. Tall, manly, and good looking, he walks erect and firm, without swagger or constrained formality, and his manner is graceful and pleasing. Instead of giving him an envelope as he gave the rest, the clerk gave him a slip of paper, on which were written these words:

“Call at the back office.”

Robert Layson was puzzled, and looked inquiringly at the clerk, doubtless thinking he would give some explanation; but that individual, resuming his business, paid no further attention to the workman—seemed oblivious of his presence. Layson turned the scrap of paper over and over in his hand, a sensation of oppression around the heart increasing at each turn he gave it. His face had grown quite pale, and his lips quivered slightly.

“It bodes no good, I am sure,” he finally thought, rather than spoke, as he turned toward the back office.

“Ah!” said Mr. Hurk as Robert entered, in a cold but sneering tone.

“I fear this is the harbinger of bad news,” said Layson, laying the slip of paper on the proprietor’s desk.

“We have decided to reduce our help,” was the chilling response.

“I wish you had informed me of this earlier in the season,” replied Layson, respectfully, but with a slow, condemning force, which, unlike the touch of Ithuriel’s spear, penetrated the breast of the mill-owner to the core.

“How could I know the fluctuations of the market!” he stammered in an extenuating, confused tone.

"I appear to be the only man so far discharged. I fear I have offended you in some manner, or else some one has poisoned your mind against me?" said Layson, inquiringly.

"Well, since you will have the truth, I will tell you why you are the first to go. You are too popular with the hands, not only in this mill, but in all the mills. I know everything that transpires among the men, and I know you have almost unbounded influence over them, and for this reason I consider you a very dangerous man to have in my employ." All this was uttered in the coldest, most indifferent manner possible.

"But, Mr. Hurk, have I ever used my influence to the detriment of your interests?"

"I will readily admit that you have not, but what is to prevent you from doing so? I know you have prevented trouble many a time, which would have injured both the men and myself; I well know that you are a man of much sense and good judgment, but all your sympathies are with the hands, and as I have no guarantee you will not use your influence some time to injure my business, I deem it a duty to myself to discharge you."

"Mr. Hurk, I would scorn to say one word more to you, but for my wife—for her sake, I am a coward; for her sake, I stifle my feelings as a man; for her sake, I implore you to permit me to remain until I can obtain work elsewhere. The other mill-owners, I know, will not employ me, although the good God knows I never injured them a cent's worth; and besides, you take me too short, right at the commencement of winter; it is too abrupt; you should have given me a month's notice, at least."

"I have nothing further to say; here are your

wages, and there is the door," was the only response to the workman's appeal.

Robert Layson went out into the street and turned his face toward home, the saddest man in all Chintsville. Nora was at the gate to meet him, all smiles and love, but when she saw his sad, clouded brow the smiles left her face and the tears stood in her eyes. He took her arm and helped her up the steps, for, to use the homely, scriptural expression, "she was great with child," and needed all the care, all the solicitude, and all the assistance the strong arm of her husband could give.

She had his slippers warm for him, and when he had put them on and sat down, she moved about him so affectionately that he partly brightened up, but his heart sank again like lead when he noticed how slowly, languidly and heavily she moved about the room; all his manly pity was aroused, his heart melted within him, and he felt as if he could, at that moment, lay down his life for her.

They had been married scarcely a year; had married as all workingmen marry, poor; but since they had joined hands for life, Robert had been steady and industrious, and Nora had been frugal and economical, and money enough had been saved to furnish the cottage plainly but comfortably; but there was nothing left for an emergency like this. Every dollar Robert could spare he had lately expended in making his wife as comfortable as her condition required, and render her approaching accouchment less liable to hardship and danger, and now he was out of work and hardly a dollar to fall back upon.

Nora sat down on a low stool at her husband's feet, laid her cheek on his knee, and looked up into his clouded face.

"What is it, Robert?" she asked in a sweet, soft voice.

"Darling, I have been discharged, and I know none of the other mill-masters will employ me. Nora—my—heart is breaking," he gasped convulsively, and he covered his face with his hands to hide from her the bitter tears of a strong man.

She climbed upon his knee like a child, put her soft arms about his neck, kissed him and tried to soothe him, but ended by pillowing her head on his breast and indulging in a good cry herself.

This aroused Robert to calmness, and kissing her gently, he said: "You must not fret, Nora, I will find work if there is any to be had in the country."

"I know you will, Robert, and I will try and be brave and strong, but how can I let you go? If I should be taken sick and you away I know I should die."

"Nora, darling, I won't leave you—but—but if I remain idle we will starve or I will have—to—beg, and I would about as soon starve as do that."

"So would I," replied Nora, pluckily; "but Robert," she added, abruptly, "I think I saw an advertisement in the morning paper; wait until I get it."

Robert jumped up, ran into the little parlor and brought out the paper.

"You are so kind and thoughtful," she murmured sweetly, when he came back.

"Am I? then this is my reward," he said as he kissed her tenderly, "and my little wife will have to find the advertisement in lieu of running after the paper," he laughingly added.

Nora ran her eyes over the want columns, and in a moment exclaimed: "Yes, here it is; shall I read it?"

Robert nodded a smiling affirmative, and Nora read this advertisement :

"Wanted immediately—Fifty mill operatives, including weavers, spinners, dyers, etc., etc. Liberal wages and steady employment guaranteed. Apply within two weeks.
"GUBBER & SONS,
"Lakeville."

"Why, it's just the thing," exclaimed Robert, gleefully.

"And it is dated yesterday, so that there are but two days of the two weeks passed," said Nora, confidently.

"But, Nora, it is a great way off, nearly a thousand miles, and you know I can't leave you."

Robert spoke sadly and despondently again. Nora sat and pondered a little while—she thought hard and quick.

"Robert, let us sell our furniture, it will bring half what we gave for it, and that amount will take us both to Lakeville."

"You go with me, Nora! You go to Lakeville?" said Robert in surprise, "why, Nora, darling, you could not stand the journey, it would kill you; Nora, you must not think of such a thing."

"Oh! yes, Robert, I can stand that and much more, too. A woman who loves as I do can endure a great deal; so, Robert, that is just what we will do; you can get some bills printed to-morrow and the furniture can be sold and our journey begun in four days."

Robert tried to argue her out of the notion, but the little woman was spirited and would have it so, and in the end he concluded it was the best thing he could do. He could not leave Nora in her present condition, and if he remained he could not provide for her. The winter was upon them and no escape from the dilemma presented itself, except

to take her with him to Lakeville, where work was certain and where he could easily secure a quiet boarding-house, and in the ensuing summer he could save enough to again furnish a house of his own.

"I believe you are right, Nora," he at last said, after turning the matter thoughtfully over in his mind, but there was a shade of doubt in his voice.

"And will you do it, Robert?"

"Yes, Nora, I think it is the best thing we can do."

"You are a dear, good, old darling!" and she put her arms around his neck and kissed him fondly; "but what a thoughtless, silly thing I am; you must be starved;" and the little woman glided away and busied herself with the evening meal.

Robert and his wife spent a very happy evening, and on the day following the sale-bills were printed and posted in conspicuous places in the vicinity, and two days afterward the auctioneer's red flag was flying in front of the door. The next day Richard and his wife bade farewell to a few friends who had gathered at the depot to see them off and bid them God-speed. In a short time they had left Chintsville and its scenes forever.

"I did not think I would regret so much leaving the old place," said Robert, as the train shot out of the valley through a deep cut and hid from view their native place.

"If we were not flying from persecution I would cry; I want to cry so much, but I won't," replied Nora a little spitefully.

"I share that feeling with you, Nora, but when I think of the many happy hours we enjoyed there together, it makes me sad, and wicked, too. I feel like cursing the man who drove us from the spot

where we first saw God's holy light. We grew up together there, went to school together, loved each other ever since we were children—babies almost; and now, we are flying from the scenes made holy to us by so many tender memories and communions of love and affection."

Nora did not answer immediately, but her eyes were moist and her heart full, as she dropped her head on her husband's shoulder, and said softly—

"Let us forget dear old Chintsville, Robert. When the heart is sore and sad, it is not soothed by the remembrance of happier hours; it rather adds to the misery we endure to think of the pleasant past at such a time."

After two days' travel they reached Lakeville, but the long ride, the cold cars, the tossing and racking, the noise and din, and want of sleep, told sadly on poor Nora; she was barely able to hold up her head, and her cheeks had an ugly pallid color; but she bore all her suffering with the stoicism of a martyr. They first stopped at a hotel, as they were entire strangers in the city, but Robert soon found a boarding-house, and as soon as he and Nora were domiciled he started out to find Messrs. Gubber & Sons; everybody knew the great Gubber, so he had no difficulty in that direction.

"Is Mr. Gubber in?"

"He is; what can he do for you?" replied that individual looking hard at Robert over his gold-mounted spectacles.

Robert did not like the looks of the man, and his voice had something in it which presaged evil. It was a mechanical sort of voice with a metallic ring to it—it lacked heart and soul—wasn't human. Robert knew instinctively that he would be refused, but he replied as calmly as he could:

"I came from Chintsville, Massachusetts, in answer to your advertisement for hands."

"Am very sorry you did not come sooner; we are full—good-day, sir."

With a chilled heart and a mist before his eyes, Robert found himself again on the street. The cold air and sharp wind smote his face, and brought him to a realizing sense of his situation. He ground his teeth and glared like a tiger—the animal in his nature was fairly aroused. He would have strangled Hurk at that moment could he have laid his hands upon him.

"Are you one of the victims?" said a workman, who had left the mill about the same time Robert had left the office.

"What do you mean?" said Robert, scowling savagely at his interlocutor.

"You are a stranger in the city?"

"I am."

"Gubber's advertisement lured you here?"

"It did."

"I thought so; you see, old Gubber had more help than he really needed when he inserted that advertisement in all the papers in the country; and we wondered much when we first saw it, but his object came out yesterday. He reduced wages twenty-five per cent., and gave the old hands the choice of working at the reduced rates or leaving the mill; and as we knew the city was full of new hands, who came here on the strength of his advertisement, and who remained because he promised them work, we concluded to accept his terms."

"Is it possible that any man could be so fiendishly heartless as to induce men to come a thousand miles, lose hundreds of dollars, and perhaps situations, just merely to enable him to reduce the

wages of his employes?" said Robert, in a husky voice.

"That is exactly what Gubber has done," replied the workman, "and," he continued, "I understand that some men brought their families with them, expending all the money they had in so doing, and are now unable to return whence they came; and, it being a very severe winter, work of any kind is extremely hard to obtain."

"God help me, I am one of those men!" gasped Robert, as he wearily turned toward his boarding-house.

Nora was very much distressed by the news, and blamed herself severely for putting it into his head to come to Lakeville, but Robert would not have it so, as he contended that Gubber alone was to blame, as many others had been deceived and fooled in the same way by the malignant knavishness of the same man.

"It is hard, dear Robert, to be poor, but we have one consolation—our reward in the world to come will be proportionate to our sufferings in this," said this Christian wife, in as cheerful a voice as she could command, but just then Robert felt in no Christian mood, and he answered with some warmth:

"Nora, darling, I don't believe that God punishes those whom he loves. It's a lie and a cheat invented by the devil, and put into the mouths of tyrants to make us bear the yoke of slavery unmurmuringly, and go willing bondsmen to our graves; it's the sugar-coating on the pill of persecution, which enables those of blind faith to swallow it without nausea."

"Oh, Robert, how can you talk so! Don't you know that trouble brings us nearer to God?" pleaded Nora, beginning to cry.

“I can’t help it, Nora, I feel that it is the truth. The persecutions of one man and the villainy of another have driven me mad. They call this kind of experience a dispensation of Providence, but it is a lie ; if man or woman violates nature’s laws, and is stricken with sickness in consequence, it is termed a dispensation of Providence, and in the same breath the invalid is advised to consult a physician, take medicine and fight Providence. You see it is not consistent, it’s a humbug. But come, Nora, you must not worry, I am not so sick of ‘hope deferred’ but what I can make another effort. This is a large city, and it will be strange if I cannot find something to do ; so be of good cheer, wife, you need all your resolution and courage and can’t afford to waste it in fretting.”

Robert’s last words awoke a chord in Nora’s breast which vibrated and sent a pang to the heart of the husband.

“You will take me back to Chintsville, dear Robert, and bury me on the hill-side if I die?” she whispered, clinging to his neck. Folding his arms about her and pressing her to his heart, he petted and soothed her out of this mood.

For several days he diligently but unavailingly sought for work. He became more and more gloomy, but just as determined and persevering as gloomy, and at last succeeded, and hastened home to make Nora happy by imparting to her the good news.

Strange events happened while he was away that day. The landlady discovered, by some means peculiar to these people, that the Laysons had no money, and acting upon the discovery, she sought poor Nora and brutally ordered her to leave the house as soon as her husband returned. This blow struck home, the poor woman, soon to

be a mother, staggered and fell under its weight and force.

When Robert returned, he found the room full of women, and a physician present. He saw at once what had happened, but going toward the bed he was horrified to see his loved one, whiter than the sheets around her, breathing hard, her pulse rapidly sinking; her baby—dead before it was an hour old—beside her. Death was still in the room.

“Oh, God!” cried Robert, “my darling is dying! Can’t you save her?” Turning to the physician with a tortured, agonized face, he fell gasping to the floor; but did not faint, and rising again somewhat calmer, begged them, oh, so pitifully, to save her.

It was New Year’s Eve, and out on the street the New-Year bells swelled musically on many ears, but to that wretched man, in that dread and awful hour, they sounded in mockery, discordantly, harsh—“jangled out of time.” But the soul of his Nora, the soul of his infant son, whose baby lips he had not kissed in life, went out to the Master on the same air on which the New-Year bells rose so grandly and joyfully to those who had money and happiness.

The stillness of the grave reigned in the chamber of death. Robert Layson’s head was pillowed on his dead wife’s breast. The physician broke the silence:

“The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away.” Robert jumped up like a wounded beast, and faced him:

“Man, you lie! The Lord gave, it is true, but fiends in human form have taken her away—killed her, murdered her! Out upon you! would you fasten the crimes of devils incarnate upon the dear, good God?”

They all thought Layson had become insane, and they remained away from him, and for more than an hour he moaned and writhed by the bedside. Presently one of the boarders, feeling for him in his own way, brought him a large glass of brandy. Robert was strictly temperate, but he was half-crazy, and drank the fiery liquid at a gulp without asking what it was.

The brandy soon produced a wonderful effect upon the sorrowing man; it stimulated him intensely, bewildered his senses, and made him wild. He rushed from the house, rushed into the first saloon he found, and called for liquor. The bartender passed him a villainous compound, and he filled the glass twice and drank the stuff at a breath, threw down the last fifty cents he had in the world, and left. He was now quite stupid, and could not find his way back to his boarding-house. He wandered and staggered around a square or two, and then fell headlong into the street.

The New-Year bells rang as loudly and merrily as ever—rang and pealed sweet music from out their frozen throats as Robert Layson lay sleeping heavily in a noisome station cell—rang and pealed forth their cheerful chimes while a few charitable watchers kept their lonely vigils with the dead.

With an aching head and blunted, confused brain, Robert Layson was brought before the judge the following day, and sentenced to thirty days at the workhouse. When he heard this doom pronounced he gave a piercing cry, and dashed out of the court-room, despite all efforts to detain him. He ran like a guilty thing fleeing from justice, and, even after he was comparatively safe from recapture, he would start at every sound, and look wildly around. Chance or fate led him

by the city cemetery. The sight of the silent "City of the Dead" brought him to a sudden halt. He entered, and wandered up and down the walks like a somnambulist. Toward evening the city hearse entered the cemetery, and he hid among some weeping willows and glared out with fiery eyes, like a hunted wild beast, at the two men who lowered the coffin into the newly-made grave.

"Who is she, Tom?" said one of the men.

"Layson, I believe the name is. They say her husband has gone mad, and no wonder, poor fellow; to lose them both together was a hard blow; and I hear this was not his only ill luck."

Robert heard every word of this. It sank into his soul. He was just about to rush into the grave, tear open the coffin, and see his loved Nora once more, when he saw a patrolman near the gate, and he shrank back into his lair.

It was dusk when the men left their work, and, as the cemetery gate closed behind them, Layson came forth from his cover and threw himself, moaning, on the grave.

The next morning the superintendent of the "silent city" found the grave re-opened, all the dirt thrown out, and Robert Layson frozen stiff—dead—lying on the coffin of his wife and child. His spirit had gone to join them where man's inhumanity can not reach; and there the three—husband, wife, and child—sleep peacefully to this day.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

AN INTERVIEW.

"You are Mr. Castaway, I believe?"

"Yes, sir; what can I do for you?"

"I'm a reporter, on the staff of the *Voice of the Press*, and have been sent out by my chief to obtain from the most prominent labor reformers their views upon the present difficulty."

"But, my dear sir, I'm not a labor reformer, I'm simply a mechanic——"

"Oh, I understand that," interrupted the reporter, "but it is well known that you are prominent in this movement, and I would be pleased to have your views."

"Well, start your force-pump," said Tom, resignedly, leaning back in his chair.

"What do you think of the strike?"

"The men will succeed."

"Which party is right?"

"Our side, of course."

"But why?"

"We are the weaker party."

"I don't understand."

"The strong generally oppress the weak," replied Castaway. The reporter, who was a bright, keen young man, saw he was not going to succeed in securing much of an interview unless he struck a different lead. He changed the manner of attack—

"Mr. Castaway, I suppose you are a Christian?"

"I try to be."

"Well, how do you expect to secure any permanent benefit to the laborer, when the Bible says the poor we must have always with us?"

"Do you believe that God meant and willed

from the beginning that there should be poverty and misery in the world?" asked Tom, becoming now somewhat interested.

"Well, hardly that, but what do you say to the Saviour's declaration?"

"Simply," replied Tom, "that He knew there would always be natural differences between men, and because of this immutable law, bad men would create social differences, from which comes poverty, but those who create these differences, the Saviour said, would find it extremely difficult to obtain entrance to the abode of the blest unless they disposed of their property and gave it to the poor."

"But we must have the poor always with us," insisted the reporter.

"Yes," replied Tom, "the capitalist is such a good Christian that he insists upon keeping people poor lest the words of the Saviour may not prove true."

"But really, Mr. Castaway, do not the great laws of supply and demand, the wage fund and competition, regulate these matters?"

"If left free to operate naturally, perhaps so, but they are not. It is the old cry of 'the king is dead, long live the king.'"

"How so, Mr. Castaway?"

"Why," replied Tom, "the king claimed a divine right to rule, and claimed it for the *benefit* of society. The capitalist claims a divine right of selfishness, and claims it for the *benefit* of society, and upon the altar of competition he offers up with a light heart the miseries, the sorrows, and the destitutions of the poor. About one hundred years ago our fathers shouted, 'the king is dead;' now, their sons shout, 'long live the king,' for capital is king."

"You mean to say that capital, notwithstand-

ing the laws I have mentioned, is able to regulate and fix the amount of the wage fund?"

"Certainly it is, and does regulate and fix it."

"Well, what is your remedy?"

"Are *you* a Christian?"

"Why, certainly, Mr. Castaway."

"Do you remember that the Saviour once drove the money changers and thieves out of the temple?"

"Yes."

"Well, human life is the great August Temple. It has been turned into a mart of trade and machine for grinding out profits. Drive out the demons of greed and selfishness, these thieves and money changers of the heart, and the world will be better, men will be happier, and poverty and suffering almost unknown."

"Stripped naked, then, your remedy is simply charity."

"I beg to differ with you, sir, it is simply *justice*," replied Tom.

"Admitting that, how do you propose to induce capitalists to act justly?"

"By convincing them that it will be beneficial and wise to do so."

"Does that imply force?"

"Moral, and, perhaps, legal force—no other."

"You see," continued Castaway, "there is no room in America for Canning's knife-grinder. He could not exist in the light of our intelligence. Once we killed the king by physical force, but he arose again, and now we are going to tame, educate, and humanize him into an ordinary citizen. Let me show you something," and Castaway picked up a volume of Colonial history, and, handing it to the reporter, said:

"Read that marked passage."

The reporter read these words :

"I thank God we have not free schools nor printing, and I hope we shall not have these hundred years. For learning has brought disobedience and heresy and sects into the world, and printing has divulged them and libels against the Government. God keep us from both."

"Now that prayer," said Tom, "was made in proclamation by Sir William Berkeley, Governor of Virginia, about thirty-five years before our fathers drove out the king's governors; the king did not want books, free schools, or printing-presses in the colonies. The light of intelligence withers the kingly flower of divine right to rule as well as the divine right of selfishness. But does not that paragraph read strangely at this time?"

"It does indeed, Mr. Castaway."

"The old governor was positive," resumed Tom, "he did not speak in the alternative; he did not pray for Blücher or darkness—nothing but night and darkness would do for him; and yet this was only about one hundred and thirty years ago; and I venture to say that one hundred and thirty years from now, the proclamations of the capitalists of to-day will sound just as strange to the people who may read them as the prayer of the old Virginia governor does to us. The wage system must go; it is the power behind king capital's throne, and when it has disappeared and the people can shout, 'The king is dead to rise no more,' the wage fund will be buried in musty tomes and the giant Cyclops, competition, will have no more terrors for those who eat their bread in the sweat of their faces."

"Your claim, then, Mr. Castaway, is that wealth is inequitably distributed—that the laborer

does not receive his share of the results which flow from his efforts in connection with capital? ”

“Precisely. Mr. Calhoun, who, notwithstanding his nullification heresies, must be regarded as a great statesman, once said: ‘There never has yet existed a wealthy and civilized society in which one portion of the community did not, in point of fact, *live on the labor of the other.*’ This,” continued Tom, “is a broad assertion, but it is true. The means by which it is accomplished are many. Brute force, ignorance, subtle, artful fiscal devices, and present methods of distribution, in connection with wage servitude, are a few of the agencies the monopolistic Minos employs to exact tribute from the laborer, to be devoured by the capitalistic Minotaurs, and the only Thesus who can deliver him from this galling tribute is Education. It was said of old that money is the root of all evil. Man must be taught that there is a higher, a nobler aspiration of the soul than the love of wealth. It is the desire to mount higher in the scale of a better and more glorious manhood.”

“I suppose, Mr. Castaway, in your varied experience you have frequently felt how potent a factor money is? ”

“Indeed I have. I remember upon one occasion the man for whom I worked failed, owing me a month’s wages. It was Friday. My board was due the day following. I did not have a cent, and the lack of five dollars made a coward of me. I wended my way to the boarding-house with fear and trembling, for I felt that I would sooner meet a legion of Zamiel’s hosts than the long-faced, bony Xantippe who ministered to my corporeal necessities—yea, sooner than meet, without five dollars, this horror of my soul I would agree to work a year for old Relvason. But I had to face

the music. As I walked along, I felt that every being I met knew I had no money. Mrs. Xantippe eyed me keenly as I entered the house. I felt like a criminal—for five dollars, but before she had time to say a word I told the truth. The storm burst at once in all its rage, but before it had reached its acme I had reached the center of the street, being unable to stand before the hurricane of fury I had evoked. To speak in slightly extravagant metaphor, the scene first resembled a young earthquake, then an earthquake reinforced, and finally several earthquakes rolled into one—all for five dollars. I went to a friend and borrowed the money. The great poet says ‘he is doubly armed who hath his quarrel just,’ but I say he is thrice armed who hath money in his purse. The danger before which I quakingly and ignominiously fled I now faced defiantly and boldly as a lion. I actually felt several inches taller and many pounds heavier because I had five dollars in my pocket. I flew toward the house; I seemed to tread on air; I marched majestically up to the scene of my recent discomfiture and courageously bearded the lioness in her den; I met her in the hall-way; a funereal fury lurked in her basilisk eye; the smouldering fires of a chained volcano were evidently accumulating for another outburst, but I was not afraid—I had five dollars—and before the dynamite upon her lips had time to explode, I thrust that V at her. It would have done your soul good to see the sudden change that came over that woman. I never knew how much value there was in a five-dollar bill before. Transfiguration and metamorphosis are expressionless terms in this connection. The slumbering volcano, about to vomit wrath and destruction, was instantly choked with the ashes of cupidity; the forked lightning

which lurked in her eyes became a subdued and winning smile, and that which was intended for a crashing thunderbolt was hushed into a divinely, musical 'thank you ; tea is ready ; how thoughtless you are, you naughty boy, to have kept us waiting.' Oh, yes ; I have learned how potent a factor money is, and have been taught by experience that while its acquisition by honest means, and in amount sufficient to insure rational beings a competency is commendable, yet, the desire and thirst to secure it by every possible means, in amounts beyond all reasonable or proper use, is the crying evil, the blighting curse of the age."

The publication of this interview by the *Voice of the Press*, whose editors were fair-minded, honorable men, who believed that falsehood and villification were inexcusable even in a party sense, furnished the organs of the stock-waterers a text upon which the changes were rung for a week. It was denounced as communistic, socialistic, and anarchistic. One editor, a Mr. Bonidy, was especially severe upon Mr. Castaway, whom he abused in a manner so false and vile as to be really brutal. Mr. Castaway wrote a card and called upon the editor.

"We will not publish it," said Mr. Bonidy.

"Why not?" asked Castaway.

"We don't choose to."

"Do you mean to say that you deny a man you attack the right to defend himself?"

"We will not discuss the matter ; you can leave."

But Castaway did not leave, and there was a glitter in his eye which prevented a repetition of the request.

"Mr. Bonidy, your conduct is ungenerous, unmanly—you are a coward, sir!" Bonidy winced, and seemed to shrink to half his size, and a gray

pallor spread itself over his brick-colored countenance. The shaft struck home.

"Mr. Castaway," he whimpered, "you had better let this matter drop. I am not only editor of this paper but am also agent of The Associated Press, and have an interest in other local papers—I can have lots of fun abusing you and you can't help it—so you see I have the advantage of you."

"Yes, the same advantage that the cowardly assassin has who sneaks up upon a man in the dark, or shoots him from a position in which he himself is entirely safe." Bonidy trembled visibly, and his hay-colored beard seemed to grow out of a greenish, chalky face.

"Mr. Castaway, you wrong me," he whined, in a begging voice.

"Wrong a man who is incapable of an honorable or manly impulse? Wrong you, indeed! Why, sir, your editorials remind those who know you of nothing except it be the spectacle of the Prince of Darkness preaching sanctity to the hosts of heaven. Look here, sir, in your issue of this morning you abuse shamefully one of your party leaders; need I tell you why? He knows your failings, the hideous blackness of your inner life, and you hate him because he knows you are a whited sepulcher, and because he had occasion once, in an official capacity, to publicly reprimand you——"

"Stop! stop!" cried Bonidy, "I'll call an officer."

Castaway closed the door of the room quickly, and placing his back against it, said, fiercely:

"Mr. Bonidy, you abuse me publicly and should not object to being repaid privately. You are dealing with a man now, and I assure you there are various ways in which a man can protect him-

self and fulfill the law of reciprocity in human activity—but, Mr. Bonidy, you look sick—your complaint is known to the medical fraternity as *penurio psychic nihilism*; an infallible remedy for this disease was once prescribed by one of your fraternity as a panacea for labor troubles—it is a soup composed of shavings, bone and garlic; as you have a severe attack you had better partake of it liberally, in large doses; it will do you good; it's quite fattening and is a great brain-food, and that is what you most need. Good-day, sir."

The newspaper profession is undoubtedly composed in the main of honest, honorable men, who, as a rule, are the brightest, quickest and most intelligent men in the country; but, unfortunately, as in all professions, there occasionally creeps in a Bonidy, who uses the opportunities his position affords to disgrace and dishonor it. These vile creatures constitute the confraternity of newspaper thuggery. When this dirt is swept from the room of the reporter and the sanctum of the editor, the tone of the press will be improved and its power to do good vastly augmented.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

THE MASS-MEETING—ITS LESSON.

The great railway strike continued unchanged; the men were slowly but steadily gaining the sympathy of the public; the dire predictions of the press and the agents of the railroads had not, thus far, been verified; the strikers became conscious

that the tide of public opinion was turning in their favor. To still further strengthen their position with the people, and give more forcible expression to their grievances, they determined to hold a mass-meeting at Dearborn Park, which, the call of the central committee said, would be addressed by leading citizens.

The call for the meeting provoked a fresh and more savagely vigorous attack by the press friendly to the cause of stock waterers. It was claimed that the stated objects of the meeting were mere pretexts, that the real design was to burn and destroy the property of the companies, and perhaps murder the men who had taken the places of the strikers. The city, it was claimed, was in the very center of a crater that would vomit fire, riot and mob-rule should the meeting be held. The mayor became alarmed and called together the superintendent of police, some prominent citizens, including the railway presidents, and the commanders of the several military companies in the city.

At this meeting the situation was discussed. Vigorous and summary measures were advocated; the governor of the State was telegraphed for additional militia; a dispatch, in the official cipher of the United States Signal Office, was sent to the Secretary of War asking that United States troops be immediately ordered to Chicago; the available militia force of the city was to be quietly mustered at the armories that evening, to remain under arms until further orders. The following day several ominous-looking boxes arrived from Springfield—rifles, ammunition.

Although it was intended that all these measures for the public safety should be kept profoundly secret, yet before six hours elapsed the ac-

tion of the mayor and his committee of safety was the general topic of conversation on the streets, in the saloons, stores, and club-rooms.

The man who, when threatened by violence or danger, does not instantly seek to defend himself, is a coward; the man who is not at all times ready to defend his legal rights is unworthy of freedom—no better than a slave. American workmen are brave and chivalrous, ever ready to defend their liberty with their lives. In this instance they were threatened—their liberties and legal rights were to be taken from them. They immediately began to arm themselves. What else could be expected?

This fact the authorities learned and redoubled their precautionary measures. It did not seem to occur to them that they alone were responsible for it.

The mayor was importuned to issue a proclamation against holding the proposed meeting; he appealed for counsel to the railway president mentioned in a preceding chapter, but this man, by training and instinct a lawyer, more lawyer than capitalist, positively declared that the mayor had no authority to issue such a proclamation; that the men had a constitutional right to assemble and deliberate, so long as they committed no breach of the peace. The proclamation was not issued. The day upon which the meeting was to take place dawned bright and clear. Long before the hour appointed for calling the meeting to order, fully fifteen thousand people had assembled in Dearborn Park. About two hundred police-officers mingled with the crowd, which was far more orderly and peaceable than a political gathering of the same magnitude. Companies of militia were stationed at various points within a short dis-

tance of the park. Upon one of the principal streets, about three-quarters of a mile from the park, the Chicago Blues, fifty strong, under Captain Lyster, were marching and counter-marching.

At a distance the inspiring strains of a band playing a martial air could be heard. Presently the band emerged from a side street into the street upon which the Blues were marching. The band was followed by one of the labor organizations on its way to Dearborn Park. The labor organization and the Blues were approaching each other—were about twenty rods apart—when suddenly a man, who it was afterward learned was a stranger in the city, rushed into the street and hurled a brick at the approaching Blues. The missile grazed the waving plume of Captain Lyster, who sprang aside, then immediately shouted:

“Company, right oblique, double time, march; forward, fours left front into line, march; company, halt; carry arms; load, ready, aim, fire!”

A bright flash; a sharp, crashing succession of reports; a thin ribbon of blue smoke circled upward, and fifty messengers of death went hurtling into the crowd. The voice of the captain rang out again:

“Recover arms—load—ready—aim——”

A pair of spirited horses, attached to a carriage, and standing near, being terribly frightened by the loud, crashing report, madly plunged and dashed into the valiant Blues, broke up their alignment, and so completely demoralized them that they fled in disorder several rods before they could be induced to reform.

As the band and crowd were disappearing, the captain did not deem it expedient to again renew the firing. He withdrew his command to an

armory close by, and threw out a line of pickets on the streets leading thereto.

Although the street was literally packed with people only about twenty persons were killed and injured by the volley. This was owing to the fact that the citizen-soldier, in his excitement, fired high.

A mother, standing at a second-story window, holding up a prattling, smiling babe to gaze upon the scene below, when the volley was fired uttered a piercing shriek, fell backward into the room, while the babe dropped from her arms and was dashed to death upon the pavement below.

A man and his wife, carrying between them a heavily-laden market-basket, were coming up the street at the time. The man dropped to his knees, fell back heavily, exclaiming :

“ Oh ! Mary, I’m hurt ! ”

The woman sat down on the flagged walk and lifted the man’s head into her lap.

“ Tom, mavourneen, where are you hurt ? ”

But Tom could only moan and groan. The woman tore open his shirt and saw a horrid, gaping wound in his breast, from which the red current of life was rapidly flowing. She bent her head, placed her lips to his ear, and said :

“ Tom, my darling, look up to the Man above ; look to Him now ; put your trust in Him, Tom.” A slight twitching of the fingers, a little tremor in the limbs, and Tom looked upon his darling Mary never again.

“ Are you hurt much, Jack ? ”

“ I’ll never pull a throttle again, Dick ; I am making my last run ; I’m on the down grade now, and in sight of the station. Tell Nellie—you know we were to be married Christmas, Dick—that I’ll meet her at the other end of the road—good-by, Dick—write to moth—”

A bright little newsboy, with a bundle of papers under his arm, full of life and animation, was running along the walk, crying :

“ Here’s your evening news ; all about the great strike ! ”

Suddenly, the papers dropped to the walk, and the little fellow fell across the bundle, moaning piteously. At this moment, a woman, wrapped in a heavy plaid shawl, rushed out of a store, picked the little fellow up, pressed him to her bosom, and kissed him repeatedly.

“ Oh ! lay me down—it hurts—oh ! it hurts ! ” he gasped in whispers, and, as she laid him down tenderly, his head on the little bunch of papers, he again moaned :

“ I’m so cold——and the light is going out—— ”

And to the poor little waif the light went out forever.

The woman took off her shawl, wrapped the little body in it carefully, stood a few moments, as if deliberating what course to pursue ; then picked up the body and with blanched face and compressed lips walked rapidly away.

“ Halt ! ” the tone was sharp, clear, menacing. The woman carrying the body in the shawl stopped.

“ What have you there ? ”

“ Death,” replied the woman in a hollow voice. The sentry hesitated a moment, then shouted :

“ Corporal of the guard, post three.”

“ What is it, Jones ? ” asked the corporal, coming up quickly.

“ I think this woman is crazy, there is a bad look in her eye.”

“ What have you got there, my good madam ? ” inquired the corporal.

“ Death,” again answered the woman in the same hollow voice.

“ You must go with me to headquarters.”

“ Why should I?” asked the woman.

“ Will you go peaceably or must we use force?”

“ I will go with you,” she answered doggedly, and she followed him to the armory two blocks away. A sentry stood guard at the door. They entered.

“ Captain,” said the corporal, saluting that officer, “ this woman is acting suspiciously and will give no account of herself.”

The captain arose quickly, his face paled, his limbs trembled—Marcia Nullus stood before him.

“ Why do you—what do you want?” he stammered.

“ What you cannot give,” she replied.

“ Oh yes, I forgot—you came with the corporal; what have you there?” He was somewhat calmer.

“ One of your victims,” and Marcia advanced to the table, behind which Frank Lyster was standing, and laid her burden on it and threw back the folds of the shawl.

He recoiled with horror, and convulsively gasped as he sank into a chair.

“ He will never trouble you again. Can I go now?”

He answered not. His eyes were riveted upon the beautiful features of the apparently sleeping child.

Marcia covered the body, pressed it to her bosom, and walked unhindered out into the street. Again she passed a long, long, sleepless night—alone with her God and her dead.

At Dearborn Park the most intense excitement prevailed within a few moments after the Blues had fired upon the people. Greatly exaggerated reports had reached the Park. The wildest rumors were quickly seized upon and circulated until they became to the excited imagination indisputable facts. In less than five minutes the frenzied con-

course became impressed with the idea that all the militia of the city were marching upon the park. Fear, terror, and despair were depicted on the faces of many ; determination, vengeance, death gleamed in the eyes of others ; fierce and angry words filled the air ; women and timid children were fleeing in all directions. Suddenly the word "barricades" was heard above the confusing din.

"Barricade the streets ! barricade the streets ! build breastworks !" were the only sounds that could now be distinguished.

Breastworks and barricades began to appear—almost instantly—upon every street leading to the park. Drays, trucks, wagons, carriages, dry-goods boxes, barrels, street cars, paving stones—everything available was seized and utilized. The barricades rose as if by magic. The apparent security they promised, and the non-appearance of the military, tended in a measure to allay the excitement. There were nearly ten thousand men behind these barricades. It was a critical moment. A mob ? Yes, but the dynamite of our modern social system : handle it with wisdom and prudence, and it is harmless ; kick it, and the story of the blind Samson and the temple of Dagon is repeated.

The military had not yet appeared. The excitement was becoming less intense, passion less fierce. Many gathered around the speakers' stand and began to loudly call upon those who had been advertised to speak.

A tall, well-dressed, smooth-faced, sharp-looking man appeared upon the stand, took off his hat, and faced the crowd. A wild cheer rent the air. No one seemed to know who he was, no one introduced him ; the committee who had charge of the meeting, though upon the ground, seemed at a loss how to proceed.

“My friends,” began the tall man, “a great outrage has been committed upon the free people of this free city. [Cheers and cries of ‘good, go on.’] The constitution of our country guarantees to us the right to peaceably assemble and discuss questions of justice, public policy, and private right. [Hear—hear.] The authorities of this city, obeying the mandate of corporate wealth, have usurped our rights, trampled upon our liberties, and dyed the pavements with the crimson blood of our brothers.”

Cheers, shouts, groans and hisses greeted this sentence.

“Who is that man?” asked some one on the outskirts of the crowd.

A detective standing near answered :

“That is Gus Green. He is a college graduate and a wonderfully bright fellow. His father left him quite a large fortune, which he squandered in dissipation and riotous living in a few years. He is to-day one of the most noted and dangerous bank-robbers in the country.”

“Why don’t you arrest him?”

“Oh, he has done nothing that we know of since he served his last term at Joliet; but we are keeping an eye upon him.”

The speaker continuing said: “Shall we tamely submit to this outrage on our persons and liberties?” [‘No! no!’ shouted ten thousand angry, excited men.] “There is but one way to deal with this question,” the speaker continued. “Society is diseased; it needs heroic treatment. They say we are ignorant and do not understand social science, or the intricate, complex laws which govern economic questions. We must begin by convincing them that we are not ignorant, that we are scholars and scientists.” [Hear, hear, and cheers.] Let

us convince them that we are educated, that we are archæologists, antiquarians, geologists, and philologists, by deciphering by the light of the torch the cuneiform inscriptions on their pressed-brick fronts, the fossiliferous formations of their marble palaces, and the history of buried ages, written in hieroglyphics on the tiles and slates of their mansions."

"Now what does he mean by that?" inquired a good-natured, honest-looking fellow of his neighbor.

"In plain English, he advises us to apply the torch and set fire to the house of every rich man in the city," was the answer.

"What! and sure if you do that, won't my little cottage be in danger? Do you think I want to destroy my own home? If that's the programme, you can count me out," and he started to leave, but turning quickly he added with an oath: "The first man I see handling a torch won't have much time to say his prayers." This man worked for Alexander Fargood.

Tom Castaway, who happened to overhear this conversation, interposed this observation:

"Even a small property interest in society makes men conservative. If the head of every family in this city owned his home, the wealthy would not be troubled with unpleasant dreams to-night."

"Why should we remain cooped up here?" continued the speaker. "We are not safe; for while we can resist any attack from the military, we are unprotected and at the mercy of the enemy on the lake side. [Dearborn Park is on the lake front.] A United States revenue cutter reached this city last evening; I am reliably informed that she has been ordered to anchor in front of

this park ; she is, perhaps, even now on her way here. Shall we remain here and be shelled to death by her twelve-pounders? Let us march in solid phalanx into the city. We outnumber the enemy ten to one, and can sweep them before our onward march as the prairie fire sweeps the dried and withered grass."

The effect of this speech was fairly electrical. The surging mass rent the air with shouts and cheers. Reason was dethroned and passion reigned supreme. The great crowd, as if moved by a common impulse, began to surge toward the barricades. The blind Samson was reaching for the pillars of the temple.

Suddenly a loud, stentorian voice from the stand was heard above the roar and confusion of the moment—

"Halt! halt! hold on men, stop for one moment only." There was no tremor in the voice; it had in it power, will, confidence.

The great surging mass checked its course, faced the stand.

"Hurrah for Arbyght—three cheers for Arbyght—let us hear Arbyght—he will lead us!" were the shouts that now rose in broken waves of discordant sound upon the air.

"Friends and neighbors, be silent for a moment and listen to me. [Order! order! hear him! listen to him! order! order! came from all parts of the crowd.] You know who I am. You have all seen and heard me oft before; I pray you listen to me now. [We will! we will! go on! go on!] If we are to march into the city and attack the military, let us do so, not as a disorganized mob following a blind impulse, but as an organized body guided by reason and judgment. This vast army cannot be used to advantage upon a single street. We

must divide into three or four bodies, move upon different streets, act in concert, carrying out in detail some definite plan of action, to be first devised and agreed upon."

Gus Green divined Arbyght's object, and pointing toward the lake, was about to speak, but Arbyght anticipating what he would say, shouted louder still:

"There is no revenue cutter here. The only United States vessel on the upper lakes is the Michigan, and her machinery is undergoing repairs at Detroit. There is no immediate danger; I have just come from the City Hall, and there are no troops in sight. We have ample time to deliberate and organize."

All this was said rapidly, with vigor, and convincing, assuring calmness. The crowd was now in a quieter mood and disposed to listen to reason. Arbyght continued:

"We are about to do a very grave, a very serious thing, and it may be well to estimate the cost. If we move into the city and attack the military, many, very many of us will not see the stars come out to-night or see the sun rise to-morrow. Many happy wives and laughing children will in a few hours mourn the death of husbands and fathers. Our own lives we may throw recklessly away, but do we not owe something to those who love us, who watch for our coming, but who may never see us again?"

"You are a traitor!" shouted Green.

"Down with him! kill him! kill him!" echoed chorus of voices.

Arbyght leaned forward, and, pointing his finger at Green, cried out in a still louder voice:

"Who are you, sir? Tell these people who you are! [A pause.] Where and for whom do

you work? [A longer pause.] You do not answer. You are not a workingman, and never did an hour's manual labor in your life. Do you want me to tell these people who you are, and what you are?" Green slipped through the crowd like an eel and disappeared, leaving Arbyght master of the situation.

"Suppose we do attack and destroy all the troops in the city," continued Arbyght, "what then? If we inaugurate such warfare the city may be destroyed. Who will be benefited? Certainly not the honest workman. You will not feel at home in a thieves' carnival. My friends, is there not some other way out of this difficulty? What is now proposed will involve us all in a common ruin. To injure or destroy either property or life is to violate the law and commit crime; it is to inaugurate a reign of anarchy and chaos, and tyranny in its worst form would be a blessing compared to the evils which would spring from such conditions. If every particle of property in the city was wiped out and every capitalist murdered, how would we be benefited? Even if it were possible to escape the punishment such fearful crimes would entail, how, I again ask, would we be benefited? Where would you find shelter for your wives and children or food to keep them from starving? Boys, this is not the way out of the difficulty; we must appeal to reason and judgment and not to blind, brute force. The time may come, though God forbid that it should, when this method of redressing grievances may have to be evoked, but such a course can never be justified until every means afforded by our constitutional form of government has been honestly and fairly tried and found unavailing."

As Arbyght ceased speaking, Tom Castaway

appeared upon the stand, and, being loudly cheered, came to the front and said :

“ Boys, I can’t make a speech, but I can tell you a story ; will you hear it ? [Yes, yes ; go on ! shouted the crowd.] Down in the country where I was born,” proceeded Castaway, “ a neighbor had upon his farm a very deep well. One day the rope broke and the bucket fell to the bottom. While the farmer and his sons were discussing the best means of getting it out, there came along a good-natured son of the beautiful Green Isle, who volunteered to go down into the well and bring it up. This generous offer was accepted ; the rope was tied around the body of the volunteer and the farmer and his sons proceeded to lower him into the well, which was over one hundred feet deep. After they had lowered him about fifteen or twenty feet down into the damp darkness, the situation did not seem as pleasant or as agreeable as it looked while he was on the surface, and he cried out, ‘ hould an ! hould an ! I say,’ but those above paid no attention to his prayer. Becoming more alarmed and nervous, while dangling fully eighty feet from the bottom, he cried out in a louder voice, ‘ hould an ! hould an ! be jabers, if you don’t hould an I’ll cut the rope.’ Boys, in doing what you propose, you simply put yourselves in place of the man in the well, and all I have to say to you is, for God’s sake, don’t cut the rope.” The crowd laughed and cheered for several minutes and became good natured.

The crisis was passed. Reason again asserted her dominion, and the meeting, after resolving to firmly continue the struggle, quietly dispersed. Within three days a compromise was effected by which the men agreed to resume work at a reduction of only five per cent., with the understanding

that the old schedule would be restored at the end of six months. In speaking to some friends the next day, Arbyght said :

“ It is simply infamous in a large city like this, and in the midst of such excitement, to put loaded rifles in the hands of raw, undisciplined militia, who may be commanded by officers who lack the judgment, self-control, and clear-headed coolness necessary and essential under such circumstances, and which only comes from long years of experience in army life.”

CHAPTER XXXIX.

IN THE TOILS.

A calm followed. About a week later Harvey Mellen called upon Arbyght one evening about nine o'clock, and said Relvason wished to see him at his office, as he was heartily sick of the struggle between himself and his men, and wished to talk over the matter and set his men to work the following day ; but Mr. Relvason, he said, wished some guarantee for the future, as he desired to avoid all complications thereafter.

This was good news to Richard. He put on his overcoat and set out with Mellen immediately. The latter did not have much to say, and Richard's thoughts were elsewhere. The trip to the shop was one of almost unbroken silence, but Richard noticed that his companion walked close by his side. They reached the office, and Mellen passed in, closely followed by Arbyght. Relvason was not there ; there was nobody there.

"He must have stepped out; sit down; he will be back directly," said Mellen, handing a chair to Arbyght, who refused to be seated, as just then the idea of treachery flashed through his mind like an inspiration.

"I will see if he is in the shop," said Mellen, opening the heavy door, which closed after him with a loud bang.

A moment later three pistol shots, fired in quick succession, awoke the echoes of the old shop. Richard started, then ran to the door leading to the shop. It would not open. Ha! perhaps the door leading to the street was fastened also. No, it was not. He rushed into the yard. Great heavens! what a light! The windows of the shop looked like the open doors of a furnace. Huge volumes of flame seemed rolling, tumbling, hissing, and roaring in the shop. Was he dreaming? No! The glass in the windows began to snap and crack and fall to the ground in little pieces. The shop was on fire. Richard rushed toward the street, crying "fire" lustily. In passing through the gate a rough hand was laid on his arm, and a voice hissed in his ear:

"Not so fast, young man!" He turned, and beheld a policeman.

"Unhand me, fellow! what do you mean?" said Richard, struggling to unloose the man's hold.

The policeman held him tightly. Arbyght became angered, and giving a powerful lurch, the official went spinning into the street.

"Man! what do you want?" he repeated, as the policeman picked himself up and advanced toward him with a cocked revolver.

"You are my prisoner!" was the reply.

"What have I done?" The policeman pointed

significantly toward the burning building. He saw through the scheme at once.

"I submit, sir, but I believe in my soul you are in this plot." The policeman did not answer.

A great crowd had now collected, and the fire-bells were ringing sharply all over the city. Arbyght was searched upon the spot, and in the outside pocket of his overcoat a small revolver, of peculiar make, was found. Three of its chambers were empty and evidently recently discharged.

Richard began to realize his situation. A cold tremor ran through him, but his face gave no evidence of his emotion.

The building burned to the ground. The next day the blackened, charred remains of two human beings were found in the ruins. At the inquest, the *post-mortem* examination revealed a small bullet hole through the right temple of one body and two similar holes in the breast of the other. From a pocket-knife found on one, and a watch on the other, or what was left of them, the bodies were identified as those of Harvey Mellen and David Miller. Richard Arbyght was lodged in a cell in the convict tier, charged with murder.

To be unjustly accused of a crime, and be at the same time conscious of your inability to establish your innocence; to suffer the continual torture of a great wrong, and be confronted with your impotency to right it, is undoubtedly a most desperate and maddening feeling. It is a feeling akin to that experienced by the soldier, who, having exhausted his ammunition, is compelled to stand in the ranks a target for his assailants—his power of resistance or defense gone, the prospect of instant death before him, intensified by the requiem-like sound hissed in his ear by every passing missile.

As Richard Arbyght lay in his narrow cell the

night of his arrest he experienced this mental sensation in an acute degree, and each day he remained in prison but served to augment the anguish he endured. He knew he was innocent, but the knowledge could not open the doors of his dungeon, nor restore him to liberty and the confidence of his fellow-men. The real culprit suffers from the tortures of conscious guilt, and lives in constant dread of the punishment he justly deserves, but his tortures are infinitesimal compared with those endured by the wrongly accused, who sees himself adjudged guilty even in advance of his trial, and to whom the day of trial is a day of dread, especially if he knows there is not within his reach the means of refuting the charge. Of what avail is conscious innocence to a man thus situated? Of what avail is the knowledge of a happy home and all its comforts to the shipwrecked mariner dying of hunger and exposure on a desert isle? He knows that beyond the horizon lies his home, but will the knowledge bring him any nearer to it? The mind may imagine, but words are inadequate to express the keen, deep anguish that rent Richard's soul. All the miseries he had ever experienced, if summed up and multiplied a hundred times, would not equal this. His hitherto spotless name, his sister's reputation and future, his love for Vida, his very life hung on the result, and the present complexion of affairs boded no good to him or those he loved.

The third day after his incarceration, his counsel, Mr. Lanspear, called upon him, but found him unable to enter upon any plan of defense. He was dejected, broken in spirit and despaired of being able to rebut or break the force of the circumstantial evidence that would be brought against him.

The attorney admitted that the case looked for-

midable and ugly, but still, if judiciously managed, he thought evidence might be unearthed to prove that the bodies said to be those of Miller and Mellen were not their remains, and if that fact could be established it could be shown that the prosecution was malicious. To this Richard answered :

“ I feel satisfied that my enemies base their hopes of conviction on their ability to prove that the remains were the bodies of Mellen and Miller. They have taken every precaution necessary to make that assumption irrefutable, and my chances of success in that direction I regard as hopeless.”

Mr. Lanspear was of a different opinion, but, seeing his client in no mood to discuss the subject, he left, promising to call again the following day.

That afternoon his sister arrived in the city and came to him at once. She found him in the same depressed state of mind in which his counsel had left him. The meeting between them was a very sad one. This beautiful girl, a few days since full of vivacity and mirth, had become suddenly and strangely changed. One hour after she heard the ill-fated news she had grown, in a mental sense, very old. With a single step, she had passed from the dreams of young maidenhood into the thoughtfulness of mature womanhood. She believed her brother innocent of the heinous crime with which he was charged ; and all her woman's nature, her deep, impassioned, abiding affection, her keen, intuitive perception, her love of rectitude and abhorrence of treachery, her sensitiveness to her brother's wrong—she thought not of herself—were all centred on one single object—saving him from the dreadful fate that threatened him. She believed herself called upon to act with courage and fortitude, and hence, tears and lamentations were

not to be thought of. She rallied the poor fellow, remonstrated, coaxed, and insisted ; and when she left him he felt much cheered and comforted.

Bertha found a home at Soolfire cottage. The Sergeant was a firm believer in Richard's innocence, and a good friend to his afflicted sister. He entered heartily into the case, and was an invaluable assistant in securing evidence favorable to the accused.

"You must pray incessantly and put your trust in the good God," said Mrs. Soolfire to Bertha one evening, as the day of the trial drew near.

"I do, I do," said Bertha, quickly ; "but," she added, despairingly, "my good, kind friend, even though we pray, witnesses will not come to us unless we seek them, and, unless we can secure evidence, prayers, I fear, will be of little avail, though I appreciate fully the inspiration which God will send me, if I pray fervently and with the proper spirit."

"Bless my soul, girl, you are right," said the Sergeant, in his usual, short, quick tone.

Yes, she was right. There would be fewer failures in this world, and less suffering, if all mankind appreciated the truth and practical sense of George Herbert's line:

"Help thyself, and God will help thee."

God may hear our prayers and direct our thought, but we must act upon the divine prompting or it will avail nothing.

The day set for the trial was close at hand ; it was known that two of the most eminent lawyers in the State were retained by the prosecution, and it was also known that the proper authorities had not given the prosecuting attorney permission to engage such counsel. It was, therefore, cor-

rectly surmised that certain parties, eager for conviction, were using their money freely to secure that end. In the daily press the prisoner was almost daily tried at the bar of public opinion, and as often convicted and hanged; and, as the jurors, who were to decide as to the innocence or guilt of the prisoner, were to be drawn from this same public, it will be seen that the prisoner's chances of having impartial justice rendered him were doubtful and meager. True, the law provided that jurors could be challenged for cause—for having formed an opinion as to the guilt or innocence of the accused, and by a searching examination of the panel it might be possible to secure at least twelve honest and unprejudiced men, who would hear the case and decide strictly in conformity to the evidence produced, provided men who never read the papers and form no opinions are competent to decide any question intelligently.

The *venire facias* was made out according to the usual custom by the clerk, at the instance of the prosecuting attorney; and when a copy of the panel, made out by the sheriff, was delivered to the prisoner one day previous to the trial, as the law directed, it was found that out of the thirty-six jurors returned, thirty-four were employers of labor or large capitalists. Whether this was the result of chance, or whether the sheriff was subsidized and manipulated the drawing of the panel to suit those who thirsted for the prisoner's blood, are questions that will remain unsolved until that awful day when the grave will give up its dead and secrets together. As it was, it presented very little encouragement to the accused. Of what avail was his right to peremptorily challenge nearly two-thirds of the panel, when the remaining third, who might prove unchallengeable for cause, was

equally as objectionable? Truly, he was as powerless as the fly enmeshed in a spider's web.

The day of the trial dawned at last. It was a beautiful May morning; the air, warmly mild, was freighted with the sweet perfume of the countless blossoms of this flowery month of the year, and the trees and lawns looked enchantingly lovely in their robes of green—truly, it seemed, as if amid all this fairness of nature, there was no room for anything but peace and joy. It was a day that exerted upon the mind and body an enlivening influence, and everybody seemed to be abroad and happy. The streets presented a gay and cheerful appearance, and no one seemed to think of the sorrowing man, deprived of freedom, unjustly charged with evil, stricken down with the weight of "sorrow's crown of sorrow," who counted the minutes, as slowly to him, they dropped from the hour-glass of time into the abyss of eternity.

A great crowd seemed to continually press up and down the broad steps that led from both La Salle and Clark streets to the broad hall that extended clear through the massive and spacious court-house. All the halls in the building seemed alive with jabbering, restless humanity.

On the bench, in the criminal court-room, sat Judge Maclester, a large, heavy man, with full, round face, dark, piercing eyes, and nobly-shaped head, remarkably deficient in hair. However, to render this defect invisible, he, to use the language of Addison, sought to "imitate Cæsar, who, because his head was bald, covered that defect with laurels." The acknowledged legal erudition and judicial probity of the judge were the laurels he wore with becoming grace and dignity.

The court-room was crowded to its utmost capacity—every foot of space was occupied. Nine

o'clock—the judge gave a slight nod, and the Oyez! Oyez! Oyez! of the crier was heard above the confusing hum of voices, and the court was open for business. The judge opened the docket and in a clear, distinct voice called the case of “The State of Illinois *versus* Richard Arbyght.”

Silence reigned in the room for a moment. The prosecuting attorney said the State was ready to proceed; Mr. Lanspear did not desire a postponement, so the sheriff was directed to bring in the prisoner.

This was an awful moment for Arbyght; to face that mass of staring, gaping, open-mouthed faces was a task that required all his nerve, all his manhood, all the force of his being. He walked in with a firm step, and calm, fearless manner. In a few moments he was to be tried for his life, not before the great omniscient Unraveler of mysteries and Unveiler of secrets; not before the Dispenser of immutable justice, but before fallible, corruptible beings, who could see nothing but what was made plain, and who, even then, might not dispense justice to the accused.

The prosecuting attorney, in a clear voice, read the indictment, which was drawn up in the usual form and charged that:

“Richard Arbyght, on the eighteenth day of April, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and ———, in the county of Cook aforesaid, did unlawfully, maliciously, purposely, and feloniously kill and murder one David Miller and one Harvey Mellen; the said Richard Arbyght being then and there engaged in the perpetration of the crime of arson, that is to say, being then and there engaged in setting fire to and burning the shops of one Alvan Relvason, there situate, wherein the said David Miller and Harvey Mellen then and

there were ; and the said Richard Arbyght, then and there being, did unlawfully, forcibly, and of deliberate and premeditated malice, make an assault, and that the said Richard Arbyght, a certain pistol, then and there charged with gunpowder and divers, to wit, three leaden bullets, which said pistol he, the said Richard Arbyght, in his hand or hands, then and there had and held, then and there unlawfully, purposely, and of deliberate and premeditated malice, did discharge and shoot off, to, against, and upon the said Miller and Mellen."

It would be unnecessary and superfluous to follow the indictment through all of its tautological meanderings after legal exactness ; suffice it to say that Richard Arbyght was accused of a heinous double murder. After the indictment was read he was asked to plead guilty or not guilty. Again that unearthly silence settled upon the vast throng, as in a clear, calm voice, he replied :

"Not guilty."

As the sound of his voice died away, a murmur of applause quivered on the dense air of the crowded court-room. The prisoner glanced around and saw, in many an honest face, an expression of sympathy and friendship. His sister was sitting within the bar, looking very pale but betraying no evidence of excitement or alarm ; and near by sat Paul Geldamo, who in this hour of trouble was proving himself a friend without fear or reproach. Tom Castaway was also there.

Two days were occupied in impaneling a jury. A large portion of the *venire* was objectionable to the defense and the right of challenge was fully exercised. Only two out of thirty-six men were acceptable to them, these two being farmers. The list having been exhausted, an *alias venire* was is-

sued and a hundred names selected from which to complete the jury. The complexion of the second list of jurors was no more satisfactory to the defense, as they recognized in a majority of the names drawn men who were bitterly hostile to all forms of associated labor. With the exception, therefore, of the two farmers they had accepted, they concluded to be content with those they deemed least objectionable of the whole panel.

After the jury had been sworn, the prosecuting attorney opened the case by attempting to explain the language of the indictment. He labored hard for half an hour in a vain effort at translating that jargon of complex repetitions into more rational and intelligible speech. When he sat down the impression prevailed among the jury that a murder had been committed, and that the prisoner was supposed to be the party who had committed the crime.

One of the learned counsel engaged by the prosecution now arose and made a lengthy and detailed statement of what the State expected to prove, after which Mr. Lanspear stated what the defense expected to prove.

The State called a great number of witnesses, including Relvason, Spindle, and Mrs. Mellen. The three witnesses named testified directly in corroboration of every main statement made by the prosecution and every main fact charged in the indictment.

On the cross-examination of these witnesses Lanspear based his main hopes of success ; in fact, the policy of the defense was to defeat the prosecution with its own witnesses.

The surgeon who examined the bodies at the inquest was the first witness subjected to a searching cross-examination.

Question. "Did any part of either of the bodies escape the effects of the fire?"

Answer. "The abdomen of the body recognized as Miller's was not charred or burned; it seems that he fell forward on some shavings which did not burn at first, and were evidently saturated with water afterward and were thus prevented from burning."

Question. "If a body had been dead one or two days how would you determine that fact?"

Counsel for State: "I object."

Lanspear: May it please the Court, I wish to show by this witness that the bodies found in the ruins of this building had actually been dead some days previous to the day the crime is alleged to have been committed. The theory of the prosecution is that these men were killed upon the night of the fire; the testimony of this witness is to that effect, and my questions are and will be strictly confined to matters brought out by the examination-in-chief."

The Court: "It is competent for the defense to examine the witness upon all matters covered by the direct examination—the question is admissible."

Answer. "In such a case the most satisfactory test would be the occurrence of putrefaction, which manifests itself in a sort of blue-green discoloration of the cutaneous surface; besides the body would present a general appearance of cadaveric rigidity."

Question. "Would intense heat produce these symptoms in a few hours?"

Answer. "It would not."

Question. "Now, is it not a fact that this cadaveric rigidity and discoloration of the cutaneous surface was most plainly observable in the body

said to be that of Tom Miller; and is it not a fact that putrefaction to some extent existed in both bodies?"

Answer. "To a certain extent such was the case, and I called attention to it at the time."

Question. "Would a body, dead twelve hours, show these symptoms to the extent that these bodies examined at the inquest did?"

Answer. "I don't think it would."

A little wave of applause surged through the room at this juncture, but it was speedily checked by the court.

The policeman who made the arrest was the next witness called by the State. His evidence was of the most damaging character; and when the examination-in-chief had been finished, the case looked desperate for the defense.

The cross-examination elicited the following:

Question. "You say you were on duty on the evening of the eighteenth of April. Will you please tell the jury in what part of the city your beat was at that time?"

Answer. "My beat was on Hickory, Cologne and other streets in the Twenty-ninth ward."

Question. "Why were you nearly a mile away from your beat on the night you arrested the prisoner?"

Witness. "Why?"

Counsel for the State: "What has that to do with the case?"

A sharp tilt followed between counsel for prosecution and defense.

The court held that the question was relevant, and ordered the witness to answer.

Answer. "I had business down town, and got excused, and a substitute was put on in my place."

Question. "What was the nature of your business down town that night?"

Answer. "I went down to settle a bill."

Question. "You are not on duty during the day, are you?"

Answer. "No, sir."

Question. "Did you not have time enough during the day to attend to your business, if you had desired, without getting excused from duty at night to attend to it?"

Counsel for State: "I object."

Lanspear: "Oh, well; if you object to such a question, I do not care to press it."

Question. "You say the empty chambers in this pistol had been recently discharged when you took it from the prisoner's pocket. How do you know they had been recently discharged?"

Answer. "The smell of gunpowder was strong and fresh."

Question. "If the pistol had been discharged two hours would the smell of gunpowder be strong and fresh?"

Answer. "I don't know."

Question. "Through what door did the prisoner emerge from the shop?"

Answer. "Through the office door."

Question. "Were you not at that gate on the evening of April eighteenth in pursuance of a prearranged plan?"

Counsel for the State: "We object——"

"No, sir," promptly replied the witness.

Spindle testified that he saw Miller enter the shop as he left the office; and as he left the yard by the lower gate he saw two men enter the office—which was open at night for the accommodation of the watchmen—and that after he had proceeded a few rods he heard the shots, and re-

turned, to find the shop on fire, and saw a man leave the office and run toward the upper gate. He tried to head off this man, but found, when he arrived at the gate, that the man—Arbyght—was in the hands of the officer.

Lanspear turned his battery on this witness with raking effect.

Question. "Did the prisoner, while in your employ, ever enter the shop from the office, or the office from the shop?"

Answer. "No, sir."

Question. "Then he could not be aware of the fact that the office door leading into the shop closed automatically?"

Answer. "I can't say that he was." (In a nervous and excited manner.)

Question. "If he went into the shop from the office would the door close after him, and could it be opened from the shop side?"

Answer. "It would close of itself unless——"

Lanspear: "Confine yourself to the question."

Answer. (With visible agitation.) "It could not be opened from the shop side."

Question. "Were you ever at the office as late as ten o'clock before the evening of the fire?"

Answer. "I was."

Question. "When?"

Answer. "Can't tell specifically."

Question. "Can you name a single occasion?"

Answer. "Not at present."

Question. "Were there two barrels of naphtha stored in the shop; and, if so, when were they stored there and for what purpose?"

Answer. (Witness very pale.) "There were two casks of naphtha brought to the shop, some days before the fire, for the purpose of painting the building."

Question. "How often do you paint the shop or shops?"

Answer. "About once in five or six years."
(In a nervous tone.)

Question. "Is it not a fact, sir, that the shop which was burned was painted eight months ago?"

The witness paled and hesitated to answer, while a hum of excitement was audible among the spectators.

Lanspear: "Answer my question, sir; yes or no?"

Answer. "Y-e-s."

Question. "How long was it after you saw the prisoner enter the shop before you saw the fire?"

Answer. "About five minutes."

Question. "In that time would it not be impossible to produce the fire you beheld on your return, except by the agency of naphtha or some other equally inflammable substance?"

Answer. "I think it would."

Question. "Did any union man enter the shop after the naphtha was brought there?"

Answer. (Trembling.) "I don't know."

Question. "Did you ever see or hear of any union man who entered during that time?"

Answer. "No."

Question. "Did you see the defendant in or near the shops after the naphtha was stored there?"

Answer. "I don't think I did."

Question. "Is it not a fact that your foreman had strict orders to keep union men out?"

Answer. "I believe such orders were given."

"That is all."

Relvason was the next witness. His testimony related principally to the existence of the union and the ill-feeling between Arbyght and himself. In cross-examination he fell into the same trap.

that Spindle did concerning the door leading from the office to the shop. He also acknowledged having given orders to keep union men off the premises, and stated that the naphtha was stored in the shop, to be used for painting it, and was caught, in reference to the shop being painted eight months before, the same as his chief clerk.

Mrs. Mellen was the next witness called by the State, and was cross-examined as follows :

Question. " You say you have not seen or heard of your husband since the night of the fire?"

Answer. (Crying.) " Never saw or heard of him since."

Question. " Did he say anything when you last saw him about leaving the city unexpectedly?"

Answer. " No sir ; he said he would be back soon ; he left the house about seven o'clock."

The prosecution seemed pleased at this answer, and the friends of the accused seemed equally depressed by it.

Question. " Did you see the body after the fire?"

Answer. " Yes, sir," sobbing.

Question. " Were the feet incased in boots or shoes?"

Answer. " In heavy, low shoes."

Question. " When your husband left home did he have on a pair of shoes?"

Counsel for State: " We object ; this question can have no possible bearing on the case."

Lanspear, rising: " May it please your Honor, it has always been held, and will not be denied by me, that circumstantial evidence is competent to convict a criminal, and it is just as necessary to the welfare of society that such should be the case, as it is necessary that this monstrous, execrable crime should be punished ; but herein I feel bound to

make a distinction, that the learned counsel for the State wish to ignore. I claim that it should first of all be proven by direct testimony that the remains in question are the bodies of the men charged in the indictment to have been murdered by the prisoner at the bar. The prosecution have endeavored to prove that one of the bodies was the body of Harvey Mellen. They claim to have proven this by a watch, which it is claimed belonged to the said Mellen. Now, so far as it served their purpose, the prosecution have claimed, as a principle of law, that articles of raiment are legal evidences of identity. In this I fully agree with the learned counsel, and as we wish to prove that the body in question was not the body of Harvey Mellen, we claim the same right, may it please your Honor, to make articles of raiment a legal evidence of identification."

Counsel for State: "Your Honor——"

The Court, interruptingly: "The question is proper and competent;" sharply, "let the trial proceed."

Answer. "My husband never wore shoes to my knowledge."

Question. "Do you remember ever seeing your husband have a pair of shoes?"

Answer. "He never owned a pair of shoes since we were married."

An apostate member of the union was produced by the State to prove that Arbyght had threatened Harvey Mellen's life. But in the cross-examination he was compelled to admit that Arbyght merely said he would expose Mellen's treachery. This witness was also forced to admit that in testifying as he did he had violated a moral obligation. His testimony did not injure the prisoner in any material manner.

It took two days to examine in chief and cross-examine the witnesses for the State. The identification of the bodies was made a special point. Much time was consumed in arguing technical points of law and deciding upon the admissibility of evidence and the irrelevancy of direct and leading questions. The counsel for the State manifested an acrimony rarely evinced by members of the bar, but when the prosecution had closed it was generally conceded by the balance of the bar who had listened to the trial, that their case was considerably obscured by legal points which few were able to understand.

Lanspear, counsel for the prisoner, was a young lawyer, clear-headed, full of common sense and common law, and it was admitted that he had proven the possession of those qualifications by his conduct of the case so far—his cross-examination being conducted with admirable tact, ability and shrewdness.

The evidence for the defense, in the main, corroborated the plea set up by Lanspear in almost every particular. Many of the witnesses for the State were subpoenaed for the defense, Relvason among the number. He denied having sent for Arbyght on the night of the alleged murder; but could not deny that he had, to a certain extent, persecuted the prisoner. The defense proved this fact so thoroughly that Relvason was afraid to deny it. At the end of the fourth day of the trial the evidence was all in, and the prosecuting attorney made his final argument to the jury, which was followed by a masterly argument by one of the assistant counsel for the State. Lanspear then addressed the jury for two hours. His argument was plain, practical, logical—illuminated at times by bursts of impassioned eloquence and pathos, and

spiced with keen, rapier-like thrusts of cutting satire and trenchant wit. When he sat down, a loud murmur of approbation ran through the room. The judge frowned, the sheriff threatened, and the bailiff cried until order was restored. The remaining counsel for the State then made the closing argument, which was verbose, ponderous and learned, and abounded in legal citations and quotations innumerable. The charge of the judge was brief, pointed and impartial.

The jury retired, and the crowded court-room was soon comparatively empty. The judge continued to call the docket until another case was found wherein both sides were ready to proceed, and everything went on as before.

Twelve hours rolled wearily away, but no verdict had yet been rendered. Many were the surmises as to what it would be, the most general opinion being that the prisoner would be acquitted.

Twenty, thirty, thirty-six hours, still no verdict. Forty hours passed, and the jury came into the court-room and announced through their foreman that they could not agree, and were discharged ; and thus it ended.

It was afterward learned that the two farmers were the only jurors who favored acquittal, and but for them the prisoner would have been hanged. Looking with clear eyes, and governed by unbiased judgment and convictions, they refused to be coerced into sending, as they believed, an innocent man to death.

It was now determined on by the defense to move for a change of venue.

CHAPTER XL.

TIME MAKES ALL THINGS EVEN.

When it was understood that the jury had disagreed, Bertha went home almost broken in spirit. She had worked hard, and expected a favorable termination of the case. Her hopes had been strengthened since the close of the trial and the submission of the case to the jury, as every one whose legal opinion or common-sense judgment was worth estimating claimed that the case was fairly won by the defense, and for the jury to disagree and refuse to render a justly-earned verdict was almost more than she could bear. She lay awake nearly all the night after the result had been announced. She thought and thought, until something like an inspiration darted through her mind.

Under such circumstances as these, it has often been noticed that the female mind has a remarkable, almost a supernatural, power for divining or arriving at conclusions. She formed a plan before she fell asleep, which she confided to Paul Geldamo the next day. He pronounced it a capital idea, and the best thing, perhaps, that could be done, but said he feared Richard would stubbornly refuse to be a party to the arrangement. He told Bertha also that it was a dangerous undertaking which she proposed, and, in the event of failure, would ruin Richard.

Bertha, however, persisted, pleaded, and argued so hard that he promised to do all he could to aid her in carrying out the scheme. The next thing was to obtain Richard's consent. He opposed the idea with inflexible obstinacy for a long time, but

finally yielded to the arguments and vehement urgency with which his sister pressed the matter, backed by Paul Geldamo's solicitations—for the latter was a true friend in these dark hours.

One morning the startling intelligence that Arbyght had escaped from prison astounded and astonished the good people of the city. Those who believed him blameless before, shook their heads doubtfully now and seemed willing to admit his guilt. If he was innocent, why should he seek to avoid the issue? "The righteous are bold as a lion," and, if the prisoner was righteous, he would not have fled. He was guilty, hence, fearful; and, therefore, coward like, fled from justice. Thus argued the press, thus argued the public, with very few exceptions.

Bertha bore all this calmly, and said nothing in extenuation of the act. Many of his friends claimed the breaking jail justifiable, as justice in his case was a farce.

The next great question that occupied public attention was the manner of the escape. But their curiosity was not destined to be satisfied, as how it was arranged and carried into effect was a mystery that baffled the most astute detectives who were engaged to work up the case. These sleuth-hounds of justice, after a long search for clues, found all their theories untenable and fruitless.

The escape was planned by the prisoner himself. He was a thorough mechanic; practically in one branch, theoretically in nearly all branches; besides, he was deeply versed in mathematical lore, being in reality a natural geometrician. He could by the eye alone so closely determine the height of a building, tree, or other object, the length of a line or pole, the width of a door or board, that in his school-boy days he was known as the "guesser."

On the blackboard he could draw a line of any required length with almost perfect accuracy. As phrenologists would say, form and size were largely developed in him.

After the trial he was allowed more freedom than before, and was frequently permitted to exercise in the hall or inner court of the jail. His irons were also taken off. When it was decided that he should break jail he secured a small piece of lead pencil, and, on the fly-leaves of some books he was permitted to have, he made drawings of the keyholes of his cell-door and the great heavy door leading from the prison into the jailer's house. He experienced no difficulty in making an exact drawing of the cell keyhole, but to obtain the correct dimensions of the other he had to rely solely on the accuracy of his observation. Every day that he took exercise in the hall he carefully noted the size and shape of the keyhole until he concluded he had the size and shape perfect. He now began to casually inspect the keys carried by the turnkey, and when he had sufficiently impressed upon his mind the size and form of the two keys he needed, he began making drawings of them also ; but this was a difficult undertaking, one that required a nicety of discrimination that it seemed impossible to acquire by mere sight alone. The size, number and shape of the wards and the depth of the grooves or slots had to be determined upon to a hair's breadth. This was rendered more difficult by not being able to obtain a good view of the keys, as he had to glance at them when the turnkey was not looking, as he feared suspicions would be aroused if he should be caught staring at them.

After many efforts he concluded he had the drawings perfect, and the next time Paul called

he managed to slip them into his hand, giving him specific directions how to act. The drawings were to be followed as closely as possible, even the delicate pencil lines were to be taken into consideration.

The jailer was much interested in Richard ; allowed him many favors usually denied prisoners. Among other things he was permitted to have his meals cooked and brought in by his sister, who came every day and always brought sufficient to last until she came again. At first great care was taken to inspect critically every thing that came in ; but, notwithstanding this surveillance, Richard found the keys imbedded in some bread which Bertha brought him one day for his dinner.

That night he effected his escape.

Richard went direct to Detroit and there took passage to Cleveland on the steamer Morning Star. When he purchased his ticket he gave his name as William Adair. The Morning Star was a peerless boat, a floating palace, grand and sumptuous in all its arrangements. When Richard stood at the upper end of the cabin he was struck with the beauty and magnificence of the apartment, the richest and most elegant by far that he had ever seen. The cabin was fully one hundred and seventy feet long, having an average width of twenty feet, and from the floor to the center of the arched roof the height was twenty feet. The floor was covered with a rich imported carpet ; a number of oval walnut tables were placed at intervals along the floor, and along the sides were quite a number of elegant sofas, richly upholstered in crimson and dark-green plush ; at one end a great five by six-foot mirror reflected every thing transpiring in the cabin. The apartment was lighted by five or six beautiful chandeliers. By day it was lighted by

cut-glass windows, and a splendid dome of stained glass. In a panel at one end hung a magnificent oil painting, representing a moonlight scene on the Lower St. Lawrence; in the other panel two carved and gilded cupids held a wreath, within which was a handsome and costly clock. Elegant and costly lace curtains, beautiful lambrequins of blue, green and gold could be seen on all sides, especially when the doors opening into the state-rooms were open. It seemed a floating home of the genii. It was truly an enchanting scene to look upon, and not a little weird as the boat steamed out into the river and headed toward the lake, making her way slowly through a thick fog that hung upon the water like a nimbus cloud on a mountain top. Later in the evening the tables were removed, and shortly afterward ladies and gentlemen, gaily dressed, emerged from the state-rooms and began a promenade to a marching air from the piano. The promenade changed to a round dance. The effect was indescribable.

“Music arose with its voluptuous swell,
Soft eyes looked love to eyes which spake again,
And all went merry as a marriage bell.”

Suddenly the dismal wail of a fog-bell was heard on the deck, and presently a dim light was seen moving in a line directly across the steamer's path. The pilot put the helm hard down and signaled the engineer to reverse; but it was too late, as a moment later a bark, heavily freighted with iron ore from Lake Superior, struck the steamer abaft the wheel and in four minutes she sank like a rock in eight fathoms of water, leaving one hundred and fifty human beings shrieking and struggling on the bosom of the fog-covered lake, a majority of whom soon followed the steamer.

One morning following the events detailed above

a young man called upon Sergeant Soolfire and presented the following letter of recommendation from a celebrated New York detective, a friend of the Sergeant :

NEW YORK, *July 17.*

FRIEND SOOLFIRE :

It gives me pleasure to introduce to your notice the bearer, Mr. Magaw, a young man of promise and reliability. He is a detective, and has already attained considerable prominence in his profession. He will, I am satisfied, if given an opportunity, be able to throw some light on the mysterious escape of the prisoner you mentioned to me in your last note. Anything you do for Mr. Magaw will be esteemed a particular personal favor by

Your obedient servant,

Mr. Magaw was apparently a man of about twenty-eight or thirty years of age. He was a tall, wiry, muscular man, with light, flowing hair, and a long, wavy, light-colored beard. He had a restless eye, but a thoughtful look, and walked in a rapid, peculiarly strained manner, that was far from pleasing. The Sergeant received him cordially and promised to use his influence in obtaining employment for him. Shortly afterward he was engaged by the city to work up the Arbyght case.

About this time the Cleveland public were digesting the following item of news, which appeared in the morning edition of a leading daily :

“A MYSTERY—WHICH IS IT?”

Yesterday a body was washed ashore about two miles east of Black river. It is evidently the body of one of the victims of the ill-fated Morning Star. The features and body are very much swollen, and somewhat disfigured and mutilated by the action of the waves beating the body against the gravely beach, and by being gnawed by pike or other denizens of

the lake. The features are utterly beyond identification. In the pants' pocket was found a few keys, attached to a small silver shield on which are engraved the words, "Richard Arbyght, Chicago, Ill." There was also found on the body a heavy double-cased gold watch, and on the inside back case these words appear, also engraved, "Richard Arbyght, U. S. Army." This seems to indicate very strongly that it is none other than the body of the murderer who escaped from the Chicago jail a few days ago. But here comes the mystery: In a diary found on the remains, there appears the name of William Adair, in two three places; a boat ticket found between the leaves also bears the same name. The diary and ticket were, when found, almost a mass of pulp, but after being carefully dried it was found that the writing had not been wholly obliterated by the action of the water. There seems to be no solution to this mystery, except that the escaped prisoner was traveling under an assumed name. The body was brought to the city last night by the tug "Old Jack," and is now at Howland's, where it will remain for a day or two. An inquest will be held to-morrow morning.

LATER.—We have learned since writing the above that the boat register has been picked up, and that the name William Adair appears among the list of passengers.

The leading facts of this item were telegraphed to the authorities at Chicago and in return a telegram was received from the prosecuting attorney asking that the inquest be delayed until his arrival in Cleveland, which city he reached the next day accompanied by Bertha Arbyght, who identified the clothing as being worn by her brother when she last saw him. This, in connection with the evidences of the identity already mentioned, seemed to leave no doubt in the public mind, or in the minds of the coroner's jury, that the body was that of Richard Arbyght.

Bertha had the remains properly interred, and then returned to Chicago, immured herself within Soolfire cottage, and was seen on the streets no more. Her sorrow was her own and in silence and obscurity she endured it.

Mr. Magaw, being deprived of employment by this unlooked-for denouement, opened an office on

Milwaukee avenue, and having good references he soon began to do a thriving business as special detective.

For some time after the finding and burial of Arbyght's body, the press of the city found ample food for striking editorials on the manifest dispensation of an outraged God, as shown in the fearful punishment visited upon the criminal who sought by flight to escape the expiation of his crime. But an unexpected event suddenly deprived the public of the benefit of these admonitory lay sermons.

The *Voice of the Press* contained this startling piece of intelligence about a week after Bertha's return to the city :

“ WAS THERE FOUL PLAY ? ”

It seems as if the Arbyght muddle will never be made sufficiently clear to enable an unbiased mind to form a comprehensive estimate of the real merits of the case. We have always been disposed to halt between two opinions when we asked ourself to condemn this man on the force of circumstances, which we admit had a decidedly ugly bearing touching his innocence. We had half a mind to condemn and half a mind to doubt heretofore; but hereafter it will be a hard matter to convince us that he was not more sinned against than otherwise. We are forced to this conclusion by an extraordinary event—a link in the mystery has been found. One of the city dredges a few hours ago, while dredging in the South Branch, brought up the end of a medium-sized cable-chain. The men at the dredge boat seeing the chain took hold of it and drew it into the boat. It proved to be quite long and at one end an iron pillar was found attached. This pillar has been identified as being the one that supported the old building which, it was claimed, fell accidentally last winter, and which proved so nearly fatal to Arbyght at that time, and from the effects of which fall poor Wood is now in the Jacksonville Asylum. At the other end of the chain was attached a strong coil of rope, which was evidently severed by a sharp instrument. All this points to one fact—one end of that chain was fastened to a pile on one side of the river, the other end being fastened to the pillar, the building was torn down by some passing vessel, which

caught the cable on its prow and wrenched the pillar from its base. The rope which fastened the cable to the pile was then cut, and the perpetrators of this fiendish crime supposed all evidence of their guilt lay buried forever; but

God moves in a mysterious way,

and all doers of evil may rest assured their evil deeds will some day be unveiled to the world. Every circumstance connected with this case points to the conclusion we have drawn, and we only add, that the plot which failed to destroy Arbyght last winter succeeded better last spring.

This article created profound sensation, which was doubly intensified two days later by the appearance of the following from the same source :

"ANOTHER LINK."

Two days ago we gave expression to what is now proven to have been a well-founded belief, that Arbyght was innocent of the crime imputed to him. That "truth is stranger than fiction" there can be no longer any doubt. Mellen and Miller have actually appeared in the city alive and well. They claim or say some Eastern land company's agent offered them free transportation to a distant point in Arizona, and that they availed themselves of the offer immediately, as a party of colonists were passing through the city that very evening, and they had to go then or lose the opportunity. Mellen claims to have written his wife and thinks the letter must have been lost. This is the most unblushing piece of impudence it has ever been our fortune to record. We believe these men have been in the city during all this time, and we call upon the authorities to have them arrested for conspiring against the life of a citizen. The man they sought to hang has been drowned, and lo! up turn the murdered victims. Had Arbyght been hanged they would turn up just the same. We further believe that other parties are implicated in this affair, and that Mellen and Miller are the tools of some deeper-dyed villains. Our opinion in this direction is strengthened by the fact that Detective Magaw has discovered a similar, an identical trade-mark on the cable chain and on the pistol with which it was claimed the unfortunate Arbyght committed the murder; he has further discovered that this trade-mark belongs to a prominent hardware merchant of this city, who it seems entertained a deadly enmity for the man who found a premature grave through the machinations of these secret, midnight assassins.

The effect of this intelligence was fairly start-

ling; everybody now believed Arbyght to have been wrongly accused, and to have been the victim of a malevolent conspiracy, and many of those who were loudest in condemning were equally anxious to do justice to his memory.

When dark, repellant suspicion casts her shadow over one of God's images, an uncharitable world, instead of dispelling the shade by throwing upon it the light of truth which is always emitted from impartial, dispassionate investigation, is only too willing to convert possible into positive guilt. The tendency of man to suspect and condemn his fellow-man upon the appearance of the faintest token or breath of suspicion, which may have been wafted by malice, or have sprung from the smoke of rumor, can only be accounted for by the proneness to evil that must necessarily exist in the hearts of men—born, as the theologians tell us, in sin. But the fickle haste men display in changing their opinions when it is discovered they were erroneous, springs not so much from a desire to do justice as from the vanity of riding on the return wave of popular opinion; and it is strangely queer, though far from being lucid, how many persons there are who, having given expression to an opinion which proved to be fallacious, will tell you with refreshing coolness and assurance they thought quite differently at the time.

Mr. Magaw was an early riser; a light could be seen in his room, which was attached to his office, nearly every morning before daybreak. He had fallen into this habit by being almost invariably awakened at that hour by the rattle of a wagon passing out toward the suburbs. Some mornings the monitive vehicle failed to arouse the detective, but it was generally on time, and rarely missed passing at that early hour. One morning the thought

occurred to the detective that there was something strange in the regularity of his monitor. If the wagon came in from the suburbs at that hour, there would be no cause for thought over the matter, as it might be a market or milk-wagon; but he never heard it coming—it always went out toward the Milwaukee plank road.

While he was yet thinking of the matter, along came the cause of his thoughts, and he could not resist the temptation of taking a look at it. He went to the window and saw what looked like a peddler's wagon; it had three springs, and a dark-green, covered box, with doors behind. The driver was a red-whiskered, sandy-complexioned fellow, of medium height, and from the solemn look of the man, and the general appearance of the conveyance, he judged it to be a sort of public or city hearse. Later in the day he made inquiries touching the affair, and ascertained that the driver was the owner of a morgue and an undertaking shop located on the avenue, and that the conveyance he had seen was the hearse in which all the unclaimed dead from the city hospital, pest-house, and morgue were conveyed to Jefferson, the Potter's field of Chicago, located some ten miles out on the Milwaukee road.

That afternoon the detective called upon the owner of the morgue and driver of the hearse, and found him a jovial, good-natured fellow, notwithstanding his sad occupation—if any money-making occupation can be sad.

"I suppose you encounter a great deal of adventure and see many sad scenes in your daily intercourse with the dead and the living?" said the detective, after they had been talking some time on the increase of mortality despite the sanitary precautions of the health board.

"Well, yes," replied the man; "we see our share of human nature in this business, especially when there's a body in the morgue. It is really a study to watch the expression of those who come thinking vaguely the body is that of some friend, and the pleased look and sigh of relief they give when they find the sorrow is for some one else. It is a very selfish world, sir."

"Does the medical faculty ever obtain any of the unclaimed?"

"The doctors, you mean?"

"Yes."

"I believe they manage that business at the hospital and pest-house. I don't know much about it, but I think it is not very easy to get them, as some fellows tried to rob me of some bodies a few months ago."

"Indeed; pray, how did it occur?" asked the detective, with more eagerness than the circumstances seemed to call for.

"Simply enough. I was driving along one morning—it was quite chilly—and as I was passing by a saloon some one called me by name; and, looking around, I saw a light in the saloon, in the door of which stood the man who called. 'Wouldn't you like something warm this cold morning?' he asked, when I turned round in the seat. Well, it was cold, and I said I would. 'Come in,' says the man in return. Well, I knew he did not keep a disreputable place, and, not suspecting anything, I went in; and, as the man was very chatty, I stopped a little longer than I otherwise would. When I came out I saw two or three men near the hearse, beside which was another wagon; and the door of the hearse was open, and one of the coffins was half-way out. I made an alarm, of course, and the fellows shoved the coffin

in mighty quickly; and, jumping into their wagon, they spanked away down the avenue toward the city. I thought I saw two coffins in the wagon as it shot past me, but when I opened the door the three coffins I started out with were there."

"Did you recognize any of the men?" said the detective.

He was evidently much interested. It was also apparent from his manner that an affirmative answer would be more pleasing than a negative one.

"The truth of the matter is, I did think I knew one of the men," said the undertaker; "but I am not certain; but as they failed I thought it best to drop the matter and say nothing about it."

The detective pressed the matter further, and ascertained that the man suspected was a *habitué* of Abaddon Hall. His name and description were also given.

That same evening Magaw, disguised in loud, flashy apparel, sauntered into Abaddon Hall, and as he seemed half inebriated and displayed a large amount of loose cash, he soon had around him quite a crowd of admiring friends, who drank frequently at his expense, and joined in his boisterous hilarity with great assumed heartiness. Among those who drank deepest and laughed loudest was the man described by the undertaker.

"Well, boys, what will it be, a story or a song?" hiccoughed Magaw, after the last "round."

Song! song! song! shouted a dozen voices.

The detective began a medley, which was vociferously cheered; but, after singing a verse or two, he sang the following words, in the same air:

"In the gray morn's misty dawn,
Along Milwaukee avenue,
We did a lonely hearse pursue,
That to the grave was being drawn;
While the driver stopped a drink to take,
We stole the stiff and off did make."

As soon as he began the second line he noticed a change in the suspected man's countenance, and when he had finished the fellow's face was as white as chalk and the muscles around his mouth twitched nervously. Magaw thought this sufficient for his purpose, so he called for another "round," and, while the men were drinking, he slipped out of the hall. He managed the same night to send the fellow a note, in which he gave him to understand that the whole affair was thoroughly understood, and that already he and his companions in crime were under surveillance, liable to be arrested at any moment, but he [Magaw] thought the matter might be adjusted without any trouble if they would call at his office. This note had the desired effect, as three very hard and desperate-looking roughs called upon the detective the following day, acknowledged the theft of the bodies, and wished to know upon what terms the matter could be settled.

Magaw said he felt almost certain the State would not move in the case, as the State did not pursue with much avidity far greater criminals than they were, unless spurred on by public opinion, political necessity, or pressure of private personal interests; and he would guarantee that Arbyght's friends would not take any action against them, provided they subscribed to an affidavit setting forth the facts in the case.

An arrangement on this basis was agreed upon, and the next day *The Voice of the Press* published the following :

STATE OF ILLINOIS, *Cook county*, ss :

Before me, — —, one of the justices of the peace in and for said county, personally came — —, who, being duly sworn according to law, deposeth and saith that on the seventeenth day of last April they, at the instigation of one

Charles Spindle, and for a consideration of three hundred dollars by him paid, did steal and take from the city hearse, while on its way to Jefferson, two coffins containing two bodies, placing in lieu thereof two coffins containing clay and sawdust, and that they delivered the said bodies to the aforesaid Spindle, at the shop of Alvan Relvason.

Sworn to and subscribed before me, at the city of Chicago, county aforesaid, this nineteenth day of August, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and seventy ———, *J. P.*

This startling, unlooked for affidavit swept away the last lingering doubt that remained in the public mind touching the innocence of Richard Arbyght. Spindle was arrested, but was bailed out by Relvason, and that act but served to convince all who viewed the affair unbiasedly of the existence of a plot to ruin and hang the man, whose only crime was his refusal to be despoiled of the result of that natural force, denominated labor, which God had given him that he might not only perpetuate his existence, but live like a rational being. Justice had come at last, but was she not too late in coming? The men had not been beaten in the struggle, but where was he who had borne the brunt and suffered the most?

CHAPTER XLI.

A SISTER'S LOVE.

“Does Richard Arbyght work here?”

Felix Rulless looked up and saw a sylph-like figure before him. She was not more than fifteen years of age, although she had a much older look. Pale and fragile, with flushed cheeks, a brilliant

blue eye, her golden hair struggling against restraint as it clustered 'round her forehead, she seemed to the foreman a vision from fairy land or an angel from heaven.

"No, my child, he does not work here," answered the foreman very sadly, his eyes sweeping the ceiling of the shop quite slowly as if he was mentally counting the joists.

"Will you please tell me where he does work?" she asked in a soft, pleading way.

"He has need of work no more," said the old foreman, speaking to the ceiling.

The child looked at him a moment or two, and seemed to comprehend his meaning; the little woman was wise beyond her years. "I am very, very sorry," and the tears came to her eyes; "he was very kind and good, and I know he would help me to see Oscar. Oh, sir, I don't know what I shall do."

"Are you Oscar Wood's sister?" asked Rulless, advancing toward her and speaking in a soothing voice.

"Yes, sir; and ——"

"Then, my child, I will assist you," exclaimed the old man in a voice husky with emotion.

"Who is she, Felix?" said Relvason, coming up at this moment and looking sharply at the child.

"She is Oscar Wood's sister, sir," said the foreman a little bluntly. He had no intention of being discourteous to his employer, but his heart had been touched by the child's words and appearance and the sad story her presence brought so vividly before him.

Relvason stopped short, stared, turned red, and then pale, and stammered out:

"What does she want?"

"She wants to find her brother, I——"

"What is that to us? What have we to do with it? Why should she come here?" he savagely asked in a loud, harsh voice.

"Oh, sir, I shall go away at once; I did not mean to do any harm," said the child in a scared tone, evidently terrified by Relvason's manner.

Rulless looked at Relvason in a dazed, wondering way. Relvason noticed the look of his foreman, and, as if ashamed of his conduct, he turned and walked briskly away.

Rulless took Amy Wood to the mayor's office, where she told her story, and a very sad one it was. She had always been an invalid, was small, weak, and sickly ever since she came into this troublous world. Her father had died before she was able to lisp or prattle the name of papa; her mother had to work hard to raise Oscar and herself, but God spared her strength until Oscar was able to take her place. Their life had been hard and sorrowful from the beginning, but as Oscar grew older, more home comforts, sunshine, and happiness began to surround them. But all this was ephemeral—vanished in a moment—the moment the full truth burst upon them. The mother never recovered from the shock, could never shut out from her mind the horrible reality until the death angel's wing veiled her eyes forever. Little Amy was then alone in the world, and her heart yearned for the brother who carried her, played with her, and loved her when she was yet a babe; and she resolved to go to him, be near him, wait upon him, and soothe him in his darkness. It was a noble resolve, none but a mother or sister would think of it, and none but a mother or sister would carry it into execution.

The mayor, and many others, took a deep in-

terest in the fair, beautiful, wee woman, for she was a woman in loftiness of soul and mind. She was frank and innocent, but very wise, and bore her sorrows with a silent but touching patience.

Every thing she needed was procured for her, and an escort was sent with her to Jacksonville. Through the influence of several prominent and influential citizens she was given a room at the asylum and permitted to be the constant companion of her brother.

When she first saw Oscar, she rushed up to him, threw her arms 'round his neck, kissed him, and asked him, with a pleading voice, if he did not know her. He seemed scared and surprised at first, and tried to run away, but she held him fast, and begged him to speak to her. He looked at her blankly, and smiled; but it was a meaningless, expressionless smile, and conveyed such an idea of melancholy sadness that Amy burst into tears and cried long and bitterly. The maniac came up to her and stroked her hair, and astonished her by asking if angels cried. Seeing she did not answer, he said:

"Little angel, this is a prison. If you can't fly you will have to remain here. The gates are guarded by huge sharks that swallow all who attempt to escape. So fly, little angel, fly!"

"Dear Oscar, I am going to stay here and take care of you," she answered, softly.

"I am not Oscar, I am Atlas; Oscar is in a lower ward," he replied.

A singular phase of his madness was the persistency with which he disclaimed the name of Oscar, and insisted on designating another maniac by that appellation. This vagary, no doubt, arose from the fact that an inkling of the name still lurked in his mind, but the idea was so indistinct.

and faint that he was unable to locate the name where it belonged.

Amy found him much larger and stronger, but as fair and gentle as ever. He was the most harmless maniac in the asylum, and was evidently showing signs of improvement, so much so that the doctors did not deem him hopelessly incurable.

After Amy had been a few days at the asylum, Oscar became warmly attached to her, and, during the day, could not bear to have her out of his sight. He always called her "little angel," and was angry when she called him anything but Atlas. One day he told her in a secret, cautious tone that he was going to escape. The confinement evidently fretted him. To Amy he always talked of the fields and forests with rapturous delight; but, with a cunning peculiar to maniacs, he never mentioned these things to the keepers or other inmates of the place.

There was a grove near the asylum, and it was the practice of the management to hold pic-nics there occasionally during the summer, in which the more rational and tractable of the patients took part. The superintendent was very careful, however, not to allow too many out at one time. He also took the precaution to send a plentiful supply of keepers along. As Wood never attempted to escape, and was obedient and docile, he was usually permitted to attend. Amy, as a matter of course, always accompanied him, and for that reason the keepers were less vigilant in his case than in any others.

Along toward the last of August one of these open-air festivals was given in honor of a visit by the Commissioners. Oscar and Amy were present, although the inmates were not taken specially

from his ward, but, as already intimated, he was allowed to attend nearly all of these pic-nics.

On this day, he strolled away toward the outskirts of the grove, but, on account of his previous good behavior, his absence excited no alarm. When out of sight of the rest his manner suddenly changed, his eyes shone with strange brilliancy, his nostrils dilated, and his breath came thick and fast.

"Now, little angel, we are clear of the sharks—run, little angel, run!" he said excitedly, wildly.

"Oh, no, dear Oscar, don't go," she exclaimed, taking his hand, as if to detain him: but she trembled visibly as she saw how unnaturally wild he looked.

"Good-by, little angel, I must go!" he said, as he bounded away with the swiftness of a deer.

"Oscar! Oscar!" she cried, running after him as fast as she could. Happening to look around, he saw her following him, and, stopping suddenly, he turned back, took her by the hand and ran on, on across a broad field toward a road leading into the country. But little Amy could not run far, she soon grew tired, and fell down from sheer exhaustion. The maniac stooped quickly, gathered her up in his arms, and ran on as before. When he reached the road he ran toward the open country for about a half a mile, where he found the road intersected by a cross-road. He now stopped, put Amy down, and seemed to ponder, as he hurriedly scanned the horizon.

"The north, little angel, the north!" he exclaimed, with sudden vehemence.

Amy took his hand and faced northward. They ran on for a quarter of a mile, when the maniac, looking back, saw some persons on the road leading to the town, and, evidently thinking them pur-

suers, he snatched Amy up again and darted across a wide, new-mown meadow, skirted by a few straggling trees, beyond which another road was encountered. They followed this highway for some distance, followed it until it became untraceable—lost in a great stretch of prairie. It was now nearly sundown, and Amy was very tired—for the last mile or two she was barely able to drag herself along. Finally she sat down and began to weep, and the big tears ploughed furrows through her dust-covered cheeks. The maniac looked at her with something like pity in his face, again picked her up, and carried her for about a mile. It was now dark, and they were lost upon the prairie. They wandered on for some distance further, little Amy praying very hard all the time. Suddenly something dark and awful loomed up between them and the horizon. The child was scared and irresolute, but the maniac went boldly up to the object. He soon came back and led Amy up to what proved to be a hay-stack. He soon scooped quite an opening in the huge, grassy mound, in which he laid Amy and told her to go to sleep. He then threw himself on the hay he had drawn from the stack and was soon sleeping soundly. Amy arose and covered him gently and carefully with a blanket of fresh, dried grass, and then laid down again in the opening; but she could not sleep for a long time—she lay awake and watched the stars, and thought of Heaven and her crazed brother, and wondered if her mother's spirit was not near. She awoke in the morning shivering with cold. Oscar had already arisen and was watching the maneuvers of some cattle that were evidently astonished and mystified by the sight of a human being in that strange place. They would advance almost up to him, with erect

head and ears, then snort and scamper away in a stampede ; but presently they would return and repeat the maneuver.

Amy was quite lame, but she limped around and made a sort of reconnaissance which resulted in the discovery of a farm-house. Toward this house she led her brother. At the gate they met the farmer's wife, a kind-hearted woman, who gave them some breakfast and asked but few questions. Amy was very reserved and cautious in answering inquiries. She had noticed that the change of air had already produced in her brother a remarkable change for the better, and she half thought freedom would effect a complete cure, and for this reason she was now as eager to escape as the maniac. The woman asked if they were traveling to the next village, and Amy answered yes, but they had got lost on the prairie.

They traveled all that day, their only dinner being some cheese and a few crackers Amy bought at a country store. As it grew dark she thought of stopping at some house and asking for shelter, but no house could be seen, not even a barn or shed was visible in all the expanse of prairie. Despair seized the little waif, and she knelt down by the roadside and prayed. Presently a rumbling, deadened sound was heard, and a few minutes later a large wagon drove up. The driver, observing them, asked if they were going to town, and, when Amy replied in the affirmative, he made them get in.

" You are welcome to a ride," he said, " as I am going directly there."

There are no stones on these roads and they are quite smooth, so the wagon jolted but little, and Amy was soon asleep, warmly wrapped in a heavy robe the man kindly spread on the bottom of the

box. They reached the town a little before daylight; but as it proved to be quite a large place, the maniac grew restless and uneasy, and was not satisfied until they were full a mile beyond the suburbs.

This morning they did not get any breakfast, as Amy was afraid to stop at any of the first houses they passed—she did not like their appearance—and now they had entered upon a road which was evidently seldom traveled, and on which no house could be seen or met for miles. About ten o'clock the sun became intensely hot, and as they trudged along through the choking dust little Amy swooned away—fell at the maniac's feet—the broiling sun overhead and God alone at hand.

CHAPTER XLII.

A FLASH OF LIGHTNING.

Although Amy had been exposed to the intensely hot rays of the burning sun, which seemed to pierce the air with countless spear-like threads of flame, she had fortunately escaped sunstroke. Such an event might have happened had nature not succumbed to the severe strains resulting from the excitement and exhaustive toil of the last two days, which, together with the lack of food, so acted upon the brain and nervous system as to cause a temporary cessation of the movements of the heart.

The maniac stopped and looked down at the inanimate form at his feet and, as he gazed, a puz-

zled expression stole over his face, followed by a look of confusion and uncertainty. It was a sad, gloomy picture—the sister, in a death-like stupor, stretched in the dust; the brother, a poor, helpless maniac, gazing so queerly upon her. Ah! Alvan Relvason, had you been present you might well rejoice at the completeness of the consummation of your designs. And thus it is: in the struggle for towering fortunes, gigantic incomes, what burdens of despair, misery, and destitution are not borne by those who are taxed to produce them? We see here a single example, but multiply it a thousand fold and some idea may be obtained of the wretchedness and misery produced by the accumulation of a single colossal fortune.

Many, many men reach the land of magnificent ease, the enchanted realm of splendor, luxury, and sumptuous idleness, but the highway over which they traveled to reach it is strewn with the blasted hopes of hundreds of God's children; paved with poverty, watered with the tears of the widow and orphan, and made hideous by the doleful, wailing sound of misery's shrieking voice, which is heard, ever and anon, above the melodious cadences of mirth and gaiety arising from that little heaven created at the expense of an infinitely larger hell.

The maniac continued to gaze on the helpless form at his feet with that curious but painful look for some time. Presently she gave a slight groan and her body began to quiver violently. This had the effect of recalling him, for he quickly picked her up and ran across the field to a large, spreading tree, in the shade of which he placed her, and then sat down at some little distance and relapsed into the same puzzled, queer mood, his face wearing the same confused expression. Amy slowly recovered consciousness and animation, but was very

weak and almost powerless. She lay on her side and looked steadily at her brother.

It was now nearly eleven o'clock, and, owing to a rapid meteorologic change in the atmosphere, Amy experienced a sensation of closeness, oppression, and uneasiness, and this added a feeling of despondency to the other sufferings of the frail child. Light clouds, with deep, indented, rough, jagged edges, moving in opposite and variable directions, began to rise slowly from the northern horizon and canopy that part of the heavens; but anon they moved faster, grew denser and blacker, and cast a scowling shadow over the face of nature. Low, rumbling murmurs of distant thunder were heard, and the sensation of uneasiness, faintness, increased. Light, cool breezes, coming from uncertain quarters of the heavens, now fanned and refreshed the lower regions of the air; but they did not relieve the atmosphere of that awe-inspiring dread that could be felt as it pervaded and enveloped the system like an intangible, weird, awful presence. At intervals of quite short duration flashes of lightning were observed. Amy grew frightened as the flashes grew more frequent, lighting up the dark clouds with their vivid glare as they darted out like ribbons of fire in their zig-zag course; and, crawling some distance from the tree, begged her crazed brother to join her; but the thunder and lightning appeared to have had a strange effect upon him. He leaped, danced, shouted, and grew more vehemently wild as the sunlight was smothered in huge, dark masses of vapor and the quivering air was being almost continually pierced by the prolonged, rolling, leaping reverberations of violent thunder, while the very earth trembled and seemed to quake and shrink at the horrible, shrieking sounds that reverberated

and resounded far and near upon the pulsating air. Suddenly he uttered a terrible, appalling shout, and, with the agility of a squirrel, climbed up the tree and out upon a large, overhanging limb. Here he seemed to stand without any support, while his body swayed and swung in the rising breeze.

"Little angel!" he cried, in wild ecstasy, "hear His voice; see the flash of His eye; the sharks will be destroyed. This is their day of judgment. The sound of His voice will strike them dead, and the fire of His eye will consume them one and all!"

Poor Amy was now in a hopeless state of alarm. She feared that every next minute would witness her brother's death. She could not bear to look at him, and, turning her head away, sought solace in prayer.

The blackness had now become universal, and each brilliant flash of lightning was almost instantly followed by a loud, crashing burst of thunder. The lightning was evidently coming nearer with each successive discharge. Every flash was now followed almost instantly by a shrieking, hurtling, hissing sound as the terrible fluid leaped from each salient angle of its zigzag course and tore through the heat-burdened air. A fearful stillness of a few seconds, during which Amy could count the pulsations of her heart—a stillness as if the warring elements paused for a final and greater burst of fury—was succeeded by an unearthly sound that "shore the stillness like a knife." The sound was dry and of short duration, but it was the report of an electric discharge which struck the tree and tore it into a thousand pieces. The limb on which Oscar was standing was torn from the trunk and hurled some distance into the field.

Amy struggled to her feet and ran toward the debris of the old tree ; she found Oscar lying on his back, his arms extended, his eyes closed, his face blanched with a deathlike pallor and no sign of life in his body, although there was no mark of violence, no bruise or contusion. Large drops of rain now began falling rapidly, falling upon the upturned face of the poor maniac, falling upon the thinly-clad person of the delicate child, whose tears mingled with the rain that fell upon the face which looked so pale and ghastly at the black frowning heavens that scowled illimitably, the scowl of the tempest-throned Storm King.

After about three minutes a sigh issued from Oscar's lips, but very faint ; at the same time a slight flush began to warm his face. The effect of the lightning shock and fall from the limb had produced a temporary but sudden suspension of volition and all action of the senses, and something like catalepsy ensued, but the falling rain acted upon the system like a douche and restored respiration and consciousness. The rain continued to fall. In about ten minutes his natural color had returned, his eyes partly opened, and he uttered these words :

“ Who is there ? ”

After a short time he again spoke and astonished little Amy by saying :

“ Hallo ! what do you want ? What is it ? ” —a pause, during which time his eyes began to wink and blink. “ That boat was prowling around here again. ”

His eyes now opened wide and Amy saw with joy that the pupil was of natural size ; she had also already noticed that his words were spoken distinctly, clearly, coherently. She bent over him and whispered :

“Dear Oscar, do you know me?”

He looked at her steadily and earnestly for a moment, and then said :

“Why, to be sure I know my sweet little sister ; was it you that called me?—but, good Lord, Amy, what brought you here? Where is mother?—what does this mean—where am I?” he asked in a hurried, scared voice, as he looked around, saw the open fields, the shattered tree, and felt the pattering rain.

Oscar Wood was sane—restored to reason. A violent shock or concussion had restored the reason which a violent concussion had seemingly destroyed.

“Dear Oscar, you have been ill for a long time, and something dreadful happened,” said Amy as soothingly as she could. She then, in a few, brief words, told him of the fall of the old building, his subsequent insanity and confinement at Jacksonville; her arrival there, her object; his escape, and the flash of lightning that shattered the tree and brought back his lost reason.

He pressed his head with his hands, and seemed to ponder for some time.

“It is very strange,” he said, “very much like a dream; but you must be right; my presence here, the shattered tree, and you, dear sister—all appear to confirm your words; but really I know no more about it than an unborn babe.”

He was right; he knew nothing about it. His reason came back like a shot, the scope or boundary walls of his memory suddenly expanded, flew out to their original extent, but his fully-restored memory brought him no further than that terrible night; there it ceased abruptly; stopped short. He remembered seeing the same boat containing three men coming toward the old building, but when

he showed himself the boat put back across the river ; he then went to bed, and remembered some one calling him ; further, he knew nothing ; there was a dead stop, a complete shut-off, and all the time that intervened from the falling of the old building and his reawakening to reason was a complete blank.

The rain had ceased ; the storm had passed southward ; a brisk wind tore, scattered and drove the thin clouds that still obscured the sun in the wake of the receding storm, which they followed like stragglers in the rear of an army. The sun came out clear and bright, and reflected floods of prismatic light and myriads of tiny rainbows in the countless drops of glistening, sparkling water that clung to every leaf and shrub and blade of grass in the field.

Oscar had arisen, and though his step was weak and tottering, he proposed to explore the country in search of a farm-house or some habitation where food and shelter might be procured for little Amy, who was now too feeble to even stand ; but just as he was about to start he saw a sight that gladdened his eyes and aching heart—a high box, double-seated, spring wagon, drawn by a team of horses, was coming up the road. When the horses and wagon drew nearer, Oscar went toward the road and signaled the driver to stop, which act, however, was unnecessary, as the man had already reined up, and was looking steadily, but wonderingly, at Oscar and the shattered tree.

“Heavens and earth, man ! but you look as if you had caught the whole of it,” said the farmer—for such he proved to be—in a sympathetic, good-humored voice, as he gazed at the bedraggled garments which adhered to Oscar’s flesh like folds of the dress of a bather just from the surf.

"Well, I believe I did," Oscar replied, feebly and ruefully, knowing that his appearance was not only ludicrous but sadly forlorn.

"Were you near that tree?" asked the farmer, pointing with his whip toward the debris.

"I was up among its branches."

"The deuce you were!" quickly retorted the farmer with an incredulous look.

"I know what I say seems extraordinary and improbable, so much so as to warrant a doubt; but, sir, I will not stop now to convince you, as I wish more particularly to crave your indulgence in doing me a favor. My little sister is beyond that debris unable to rise, exhausted by hunger and travel, and now completely drenched by the shower that has just passed over us. I am in a fearful plight myself, as you can see. I can explain——"

"Bother the explanation," said the farmer abruptly, as he quickly jumped from his seat. "Where is the girl? Why didn't you say so at first? Come along—but stay, I will go myself," and away across the field he sped, returning directly with the dripping little waif in his arms. He mounted the seat very hurriedly, told Oscar to do the same, then took the reins with one hand, holding Amy to his breast with the other, and urged the horses into a frightful pace. Amy clung to him tenderly, and smiled as she gazed at the fatherly, sun-browned face. The old farmer was rough in appearance, but in bearing he was all gentleness and dignity, and his heart was as tender and true as that of a guileless maiden.

Before they had proceeded any considerable distance, Amy felt relieved of all embarrassment, his kind look and kinder words had won her childish heart, and she felt an instinctive affection for

the weatherworn old farmer. Unasked and unsolicited, she related her sad history. As she progressed, he would look at her strangely and earnestly, as if he half doubted all she said, but there was no dissimulation in her tone or look; she was frank, open, and convincing, and the farmer would turn his head away and draw his sleeve roughly across his eyes in a suspicious manner.

"Let me see," he said, when she had finished; but breaking off suddenly, he began to ruminate and ponder in deep and thoughtful silence.

"Ah, yes," he broke out as suddenly and as abruptly as he had broken off, "you said, I believe, that—that your name was Wood?"

"Yes, sir," answered Amy.

"Why, then, it is true beyond a doubt; wonder I didn't recollect it at first."

"Then you have heard of us?" said Amy, looking up inquiringly.

"Oh, yes; that is, I—yes; we read it in the papers—yes; of course we did," he answered rather perplexedly; then, turning, he looked at Oscar and said:

"I am not a stranger to your wrongs; you are a martyr, my boy; yes, sir, you are; but don't you know that a movement is not worth mentioning unless it meets with opposition? The more evidence of radical reformation in a movement of any kind the more opposition it will encounter. The idolator is very loth to cast away his images and worship the true God; and in Christian lands there are lots of worshipers of the god Dollar, who are very tenacious of their faith and disposed to dispute the doctrines of those who advocate a more just and a purer religion. But here we are at last," he concluded, as they approached a cosy farm-house, deeply embowered among wide-spreading maples,

stately elms, and many varieties of foreign and domestic fruit trees.

A small stream, spanned by a rustic bridge, ran quite close to the cottage. On this bridge, gazing dreamily into the water, stood a beautiful young woman. With her delicately flushed cheeks, cherry lips, large, dreamy eyes, bonnie brown hair, plainly but tastefully attired, a cluster of wild prairie flowers fastened negligently, but coquettishly in her bosom, she looked ravishingly lovable. As the wagon came near she looked up, and an expression of intense inquiry centered in her face.

"Come here, Mollie," said the farmer, as he stopped just beyond the bridge. "Take this child and put her to bed quickly, and give her something warm to drink. She is nearly dead, I really believe, and no wonder, poor thing."

"Yes, father," she replied, advancing toward them, her eyes riveted fixedly upon Oscar. Her father, seeing her earnest gaze, said:

"Strange things happen in this world, Mollie, you've seen him before?"

"Yes, father," she replied, in a soft, sad voice, and her eyes began to fill as she took little Amy in her arms.

"This is my daughter, Mr. Wood," said the farmer, turning to Oscar. Mollie faced around like a flash and gave her father an inquiring, beseeching look. Oscar lifted his hat respectfully.

"He is as sane as you are," said the father, in answer to the daughter's mute but pointed query.

Mollie flushed violently, but looked divinely glad; then turned and ran toward the house with Amy, her heart beating a vigorous tattoo the while, her blood rushing through her veins like liquid fire, her whole being in a burning glow of gladness. What did it mean?

It meant that the love, which had, like a fatalism, sprung up with electric spontaneity—but which became imperishably, ineffaceably, immovably rooted—in the soul of Mary Marmane, was not, after all, immutably hopeless.

CHAPTER XLIII.

THE BARRIERS BURNED.

The steamer on which Mr. Geldamo and Vida took passage for Europe, reached the city of Havre about three weeks after their departure from New Orleans. From Havre they went to Rouen, where they spent a few days visiting points of interest ; but, notwithstanding its celebrated cathedral, and that it is the place in which the memory of Joan of Arc is commemorated, Vida did not fancy Rouen. The narrow, dirty streets, the air of quietude, compared to the energy and push of her American home, formed too striking a contrast, and she was glad to depart—and gladder still when she found herself in gay, luxurious Paris, the world's center of pleasure, and, to a true Frenchman, the center of the world. Here they whiled away nearly a month ; every day furnishing kaleidoscopic transitions in the many-sided life of this metropolis of art, fashion, and pleasure. Vida was, at first, sorry when the time for her departure drew near, as, since her arrival there, she felt less weariness, less of that aching longing than she herself believed possible. Whether this was caused by the soothing effect which lapsing time generally brings, or by

the constantly-revolving panorama of changing views and scenes, she was unable to say, but she was not long in doubt.

The man who rushes into inebriation to drown his woes will succeed for a brief period, then comes an awakening more poignant and bitter, harder to endure than the trouble he sought to escape.

Three days before Vida left the gay city it had lost all its charms. The boulevards no longer presented to her eye the strikingly animated scenes she had admired so much at first, and that most charming of all promenades in the world, the enchantingly beautiful Bois de Boulogne, leading to the palace of St. Cloud, had lost all its attractions. The Champs Elysees no longer afforded a pleasant walk, it was a horrid, dull place ; and the gardens of the Tuileries and the Luxembourg were simply abominable. Paris was a lonesome place to Vida. Why this change ? These things had grown familiar. Her æsthetical taste had become satiated with architectural, horticultural and artistical beauties ; they began to fade in her eye and pall upon her sense, leaving an acutely painful void, an irresistible longing for home. Why home ? Certainly not home *per se*—rather home because it was the abode of another, who was home—every thing—to her.

Mr. Geldamo, acting upon the theories of the soundest psychologists, that the ultimate aim of sensibility is beauty, sought to wean his daughter from her love by feasting her sensibility with all the beauties in nature and art that the Old World afforded, thinking that, as beauty is the aim of sensibility, she should see so much of it as to leave no room or desire for the gratification of a beauty which existed but abstractly in the mind. But he was sadly mistaken ; his philosophy was at fault,

as are all shades of philosophy that seek to make rules for the government of that grandest and most beautiful of all human passions—love.

When persons love really and genuinely, there is to them no beauty so incomparable as that beautiful picture which the mind alone sees. Beauty is no doubt the ultimate aim of sensibility ; but in Vida's case that beauty, in all its transcendent loveliness, radiated like a heavenly aureola from the imperishable love she cherished for Richard Arbyght.

From Paris the tourists went to the beautiful, sunny land of the Po ; which, however, they found most too sunny to be agreeable.

The Italian spring merits, no doubt, all the poets and novelists have said in its praise ; but the Italian summer, though short, is hot and sultry enough to suit the most fastidious native of the tropics.

Mr. Geldamo did not tarry long by the Po or the Adriatic—he was soon among the mountains of Switzerland ; and found Berne and Basle much pleasanter resorts than Rome, Florence, or Venice. While in Berne he received a number of Chicago papers, containing accounts of Arbyght's arrest and incarceration. These papers had been sent to Rome, and were forwarded from that city by the American Minister to Berne. They were accompanied by a long letter from Allsound, who had sent the papers. For what purpose the reader may judge.

Vida had lately lapsed into a listless, apathetic indifference. She was sick of traveling, tired of sight-seeing, and seemed to take no interest in any proposed excursion or so-called pleasure trip to the mountains, or to some old ruins that might interest an antiquarian, but certainly not a heart-sore woman, whose mind and soul were far away across

the blue Atlantic. She seldom left her room except toward sundown, when she would invariably seek some prominent eminence looking toward the west; and there she would sit and dreamily watch the declining sun slowly sink below the western horizon, and when the last golden beam had faded from the mountain tops, and the shadows of the Alpine twilight began to gather, she would wearily seek her room. What cared she for natural or artistic beauties when not beheld with him? It is an infallible test of true love that the amount of enjoyment derived from any amusement depends upon the extent that it is mutually enjoyed.

The father had noticed the change in his daughter, and was pained and chagrined at the evident failure of his plans. He would gladly have made known to her the disgrace of her lover, but he feared the result—feared and dreaded the news would have a serious effect upon her. He thought the matter over, and resolved to impart the information by piecemeal, or such portions of it as he deemed prudent. He first told her he had received news of Arbyght's connection with a plot to destroy Mr. Relvason's property, and read an extract from Allsound's letter, somewhat altered, which lent coloring to the story; but Vida refused to listen to anything reflecting upon the name and reputation of her lover. Whenever her father approached the subject she left the room. She believed him true and stainless, and would not wrong him by even harboring a suspicion or listening to an accusation.

"Papa," she said one day, when he hinted that all was not right with Arbyght, "I do not wish to hear a word about it. Richard has enemies who seek his ruin for selfish purposes. You well know why Mr. Allsound is so deeply interested,

and I well know why others are equally bent upon disgracing him. I have had positive proof of it, but I feel that justice will one day be done, and then all will be clear. Until then I wish to hear nothing, know nothing. Papa, if for one moment I should harbor a disparaging thought in connection with Richard, I would feel unworthy of him. I would sooner die at once; so please, dear, good papa, say no more about it."

These words were uttered with a gravity and positiveness that carried the conviction to the father that she meant every word of what she said, and he wisely forbore recurring to the matter again.

It had been part of the agreement between Mr. Geldamo and Richard that no correspondence should take place between Vida and him while she was abroad. Bertha and Vida had, of course, written to each other, but when the dreadful blow came Bertha ceased writing, and this was the only circumstance that puzzled Vida. It looked suspicious, but she scorned that idea and attributed Bertha's neglect to some other cause.

Paul had written to his father and urged him to withhold the news from Vida, as he felt confident the whole matter was a horrible conspiracy, planned by Relvason and, perhaps, Allsound; and of course Paul thought his father had heart enough to do as he suggested; therefore, he never hinted in his letters to Vida that anything was amiss. On the other hand, Allsound kept Mr. Geldamo constantly advised of all that occurred. When the news of Arbyght's escape, subsequent drowning, identification and burial, came to Berne, Mr. Geldamo was so rejoiced that his reason and discretion left him, and he laid all the papers before Vida and then withdrew to another room.

It would be a vain attempt to portray the anguish, the torture, the living death endured by that fair, tender creature, as the poison-tipped, sorrow-barbed arrow entered her virgin soul.

"It was a dreadful moment; not the tears,
The lingering, lasting misery of years
Could match that minute's anguish—all the worst
Of sorrow's elements in that dark burst
Broke o'er her soul, and, with one crash of fate,
Laid the whole hopes of her life desolate."

When her father came back, he beheld a statue: the papers had dropped and lay on the carpet; Vida seemed in a trance, life had apparently left her, and her face looked like a marble Venus.

"My poor child," said the father, coming up and laying his hand on her shoulder. She turned her face toward him:

"Papa?"

"Well, my child?"

"You will take me home now——?"

The father did not answer. There was something in the look and tone that froze the blood in his veins. Why did she leave the sentence unfinished? What else would she have said? The father felt the unuttered words tingling in his ears; heard them deep in his soul; heard them floating in the air around him; saw them before him in letters of fire. Yes, he knew if she completed the thought it would be, "you will take me home now—and bury me?" But he did not take her home, he took her to Basle, and thence down the Rhine, through Germany and across the North Sea to England.

"I can't believe he is dead," said Vida to her father one day, after they had reached England.

"Why, my child?"

"If he were dead I would not have lived so

long," she answered very decidedly; then added: "There is something within me that tells me it is not true."

"When do you propose to leave for home?" she next asked.

"In about a month;" he replied.

This was the only conversation she had with her father about Arbyght since that dreadful day. She seldom spoke now, never sang, never smiled. In a month she would start for home; this thought filled her with a sad, secret joy; she would visit his grave and pour upon it her sea of sorrow.

Their journey homeward began sooner than she expected. The next morning she met her father, but he seemed to have grown twenty years older during the night. In a faltering, broken voice he told her they were to start for home that afternoon.

"Papa, dear, what has happened?"

"Oh, some business troubles you could not understand—did you see the morning papers?"

"No, father. Why?"

"Oh, nothing of consequence."

"Is it very serious?"

"No, no, child; pack up at once."

Vida obeyed, and two days afterward they were again on old ocean's bosom, homeward bound; but oh! how different, how changed were both father and daughter in a few short months.

* * * * *

"What did you say?—that safe not reliable, not fire-proof?"

It was Allsound who spoke, or rather, abruptly interrupted a gentleman who had incidentally made some disparaging remark concerning the ability of a large safe, which stood in Allsound's store, to withstand a severe fire test. There was something extremely eager and questioning in All-

sound's voice—a shade of deep concern, anxiety, and solicitude.

“I have seen many of them which, after passing through even ordinary fires, rendered up their contents in anything but a satisfactory condition,” coolly replied the man who had excited Allsound's nervousness.

He supposed he was doing Allsound a service by giving him the benefit of his experience on the reliableness of certain safes. The information worried and annoyed Allsound to an extent his friend could not comprehend. In fact, he regarded it as a piece of exceedingly bad news, and at heart did not thank him for the interest he manifested in his affairs. Unsought advice, or remarks apparently disinterestedly made, but which are in themselves advisory or admonitory, seldom fall upon pleased or thankful ears, no matter how unselfishly pure the motive that prompted them. No man cares particularly to have his own judgment impugned or estimated at a discount. However, in this case there was a stronger reason why Allsound should be provoked and worried. Not only was his judgment impeached, but as the safe then held over one hundred thousand dollars in “hard cash” and collaterals, he had a strong motive for wishing it a model of fire-proof as well as burglar-proof strength.

Lately Detective Magaw had been industriously at work investigating the part Allsound had taken in the Relvason conspiracy, and some damaging evidences of complicity had already been unearthed. The old locksmith had been visited, and acknowledged having made the key which Sergeant Sool-fire had the wisdom to secure and the caution to retain. The detective visited nearly every locksmith in the city before he found the right one;

and, unfortunately for Allsound, this man knew the person for whom he made the key. The similarity between the trade-marks on the pistol and cable chain has already been noticed, but it was accidentally discovered that it was the trade-mark invariably used by Allsound. Several other links in the chain of evidence were, after diligent search, brought to light; but through some agency unknown to the detective, Allsound discovered the danger that so threateningly menaced him, and he made the most of his time. Young Trueson was the only link missing to complete the chain—he had been home for the last eight months, but efforts were being made to secure his presence; and this fact was not unknown to Allsound, who had now resolved on flight; and, with that object in view, he had hurriedly disposed of nearly all of his available property, which was then in the safe. This was the cause of his uneasiness and trepidation.

* * * * *

“What light is that?”

“It’s nothing—only a fire over in the West Division!”

The question was asked by an inquiring stranger stopping at the Sherman House, and lazily answered by some half-asleep porter. This was on Saturday night—and that bright-red light which burst upon the horizon, and vividly illuminated the district around Jefferson street and the southern bend of the river—though only a fire up in the West Division, nevertheless converted four magnificent blocks into a heap of smouldering cinders.

Sunday came—a bright, beautiful day; and enterprising, pleasure-loving Chicago enjoyed a day of rest.

Sunday is a day of equality, as far as exteriors go: the poor and lowly gather under the same roofs with the proud and haughty rich, and feel, for the time being at least, that they are equals. An unparalleled event shortly occurred, however, which forced absolute equality upon thousands.

Sunday night an alarm of fire suddenly rang out upon the still air.

"Where is the fire?" asked some anxious individual.

"Don't know; in the West Division, I think," was the reply carelessly given; and the man asked hurried on, wrapped up in his own affairs.

"A fire in the West Division"—nothing more; and yet it was the beginning of an end, the equal of which the world never saw.

A description of the great Chicago conflagration will not be attempted except so far as it is interwoven with and bears upon some of the characters and incidents entering into the thread of this story.

Soolfire's cottage stood in the direct road of a column of fire, which had leaped the river at Van Buren street and moved southward with a sullen, rushing roar—and so rapid was its strides that the cottage was on fire before the inmates were aware of it; and the probabilities are they would have perished had not Paul Geldamo apprised them of their danger.

It needs no prophecy of mind to divine why Paul happened to be there at that moment; but, by some strange coincidence, Detective Magaw came upon the scene a few seconds later. The family and Bertha were aroused and safely extricated from the cottage—however, not before escape was cut off at either end of the street. Sparks, cinders, and circling tongues of fire were flying through

the air in all directions, like a line of skirmishers, that prepared the way for the inevitable ruin which followed.

The little party they rescued from the cottage were not, however, doomed to perish. They found an outlet through an alley into another street, along which they ran, closely pursued by the fire-fiend, which really traveled or sprang from building to building and block to block nearly as fast as they could run. Magaw, who was in the advance, suddenly stopped and wheeled 'round—his face like marble notwithstanding the fearful heat.

“Great heavens! the fire has headed us off,” exclaimed Paul, pointing up the street; where, sure enough, streams of flame issuing from both sides of the street, effectually rendered further progress impossible. Behind, an ocean of rolling fire—ahead, a sea of flame. It was an awful moment. No wonder the little group were stricken with cold, paralyzing terror. Escape seemed beyond hope. Already the stately, towering buildings on both sides of the street were on fire, and the smoke and hot air became unendurable. They gave up all idea of escape and heroically prepared to meet their fate. Bertha put her arms around Paul's neck, and with a look of loving, deathless devotion, said:

“At least, love, we will be united in death—who can part us now?”

Pressing her to his heart, Paul kissed her then for the first time, and replied:

“Oh, God! thus to die, if die we must, is a pleasure.”

He looked toward heaven as he uttered these words, as if for succor, and it was well he did so—and it were well if mankind ever looked heavenward, not only in fateful moments, but at all

times. As he looked, his face lit up with a hopeful expression, for he saw a building on the opposite side of the street, and, through the blinding smoke, he recognized it.

"As I live," he exclaimed, "there is my father's warehouse!"

But it was already a fire in several places. Paul looked at the building a moment as if in thought, and then astonished the rest by shouting at the top of his voice:

"Saved! saved! saved!" as he rushed toward the sidewalk followed by the others.

In almost a second he tore the cover off a manhole in the sidewalk, through which coal was conveyed to the cellar. He ordered the sergeant and detective to drop through quickly, and they obeyed, although they knew not how an escape could be effected in that direction; but then it afforded temporary relief, and even that was something in such a moment.

Bertha and Mrs. Soolfire were next carefully lowered by Paul, who followed almost instantly. He was nearly smothered, but the cool air of the cellar soon revived him.

They were now among casks and general rubbish of all kinds—overhead they could distinctly hear the awful, surging roar of the fire. Paul now led the way directly across the cellar, which proved to extend from the street they had just left to the next parallel street, into which they soon emerged through a similar manhole in the walk. The street in which they now found themselves was slightly a fire, but they came out of the cellar directly opposite an alley which led to a street the fire had not yet reached, and thus escaped.

When they had arrived at a place of compara-

tive safety, the detective told the sergeant that a higher power had relieved them of their labors.

"As I came running up La Salle street," said Magaw, "a man was seen rushing madly toward the fire. We tried to stop him, but failed. He entered a store in the lower part of a large building, the upper stories of which were a crackling furnace of fire. We all expected he had perished, but in a moment or two he appeared, hatless and coatless, and waved aloft triumphantly a neatly tied-up parcel; but the next instant the front wall of the building fell outward, and we saw him no more."

"That man was——"

"Allsound!" said Magaw.

The death he would have meted to Richard Arbyght was meted to himself—he was crushed and buried beneath a falling building in an effort to rescue his money from the safe in his store, the same safe which his friend had inadvertently told him was not fire-proof.

On another fire-girt street at this hour were two women fleeing before the ravenous-tongued flame. One was small and delicate in appearance, and the other tall and queenly in form and movement. In their rear glared a mighty, menacing monster of destruction, its hot breath fanning their cheeks; and to the right and left its long arms were reaching out and leaping from building to building in a mad race with the fugitives. One of the women, the larger of the two, was aiding her companion who appeared to be nearly exhausted. Suddenly a lurid sheet of flame and smoke flashed across the street in front of them, apparently cutting off all chance of escape.

The two women stopped and gazed in despair, and the smaller one, raising her pale, fair face up-

ward, breathed a silent prayer. Into the dark eyes of her companion came a look of stern resolution; and, turning suddenly, she jerked a heavy woolen shawl from her shoulders and threw it over the head and shoulders of her companion, wrapped her closely in its folds, and picking her up like a child dashed through the wall of flame and smoke.

On she dashed while the smoke blinded her and the angry flames snapped and hissed, as they curled and whirled in her pathway, and smote her with their fiery fangs. On, on, she pressed with the courage of a great resolve, inhaling heat and fiery smoke, when suddenly a great gust of hot air smote her in the face and drove back the environing smoke and flame. She had passed the danger; but, unmindful of herself, with garments scorched and singed, flesh seared and blistered, her beautiful hair crisped by flame, her strength well nigh spent, she staggered on until a hand laid on her shoulder caused her to stop and look up.

"Thank God! I have found you," said John Lanspear, as he took his wife from the arms of her companion, while the latter dropped to the ground in a swoon. She was quickly placed in a carriage standing near, Lanspear and wife followed, and the carriage dashed away.

"Oh, my husband! Oh, John, thank God you found me!" said the wife as he tore the scorched wrapping from her head.

"I thought you were lost, darling, my train was late, and I did not dream of such a danger threatening you."

When they had reached a place of safety and the unconscious woman was lifted from the carriage, the wife said:

"Oh, John," as she gazed upon the prostrate

form, "I owe my life to her; let us attend to her first," and they both knelt down by her.

But the smoke and flame had entered her lungs and done their dread work; she was beyond human aid. With a grand self-abnegation, with a heroism beside which the deeds of Homeric heroes and courtly knights pale, Marcia Nullus had given her life for her friend and mistress. What could she do more? In this last act she had proven beyond all cavil and doubt what a grand womanhood and pure soul the selfishness and cruelty of a cold world had overlooked, leaving to Him who noteth even the fall of a sparrow to decide, in that last day between her and those who had persecuted and slandered her. As they bent over her, the wife weeping bitterly as she raised the poor, fire-scarred face to her bosom, Marcia opened her eyes and gave her mistress a longing, loving look.

The latter, in answer, bent down and pressed a tender, loving kiss upon her scorched lips.

The face of the dying woman was softened by a sweet smile, and she faintly whispered:

"At last—rest—Freddie," and all was over.

In one of Chicago's cemeteries a plain marble shaft, placed there by Mr. and Mrs. Lanspear, marks the last resting-place of mother and son.

The party from Soolfire cottage were domiciled beyond the reach of danger, and the next day Bertha went to Elgin to her aunt's.

Paul Geldamo telegraphed to his father that his colossal fortune had vanished in a day; his splendid residence, stores, warehouses, bank, and other buildings were all destroyed, and his connection with insurance companies, whose liabilities were uncountable, would sweep away what real estate he had left. It was this news that so expeditiously hastened his departure from England.

CHAPTER XLIV.

IN THE MOONLIGHT.

Mr. Geldamo and Vida arrived home safely, and took up their abode in a neat unassuming cottage, far out in the suburbs of the West Side, which Paul had procured and fitted up for their reception.

Mr. Geldamo was now an old man—all his life and spirit were crushed out. He placed the control of his affairs in Paul's hands, with the simple injunction :

"Save, if you can, from the general wreck sufficient to keep me from actual want the balance of my days, which, I fear, are few."

Vida had lost her youthful appearance ; she was indeed changed. A little wrinkle, which looked strange in one so young and fair, marred the classic beauty of her fair forehead ; around her eyes trouble and sorrow had left visible traces, little marks of agony, and even around her mouth, which was a few months before ever tremulous with a lovely smile, grief had drawn a cruel line.

One afternoon she asked Paul to accompany her to the ruins of their once beautiful home.

"I would like to see the dear old place," she pleaded, in a subdued, melancholy manner, as a crowd of thronging memories of pleasant scenes and days gone by rushed full upon her.

"I am more than ordinarily busy to-day," said Paul, after pondering a few moments, "but will manage to come home early, and we will go down this evening."

"Very well, Paul ; that will do just as well," said Vida.

"The ruins will look romantic, and have a weird beauty when flooded by the pale moonlight, but, if we were to go now, their unsightliness would, perhaps, be too suggestive," added Paul, either in favor of the evening visit or in extenuation of the postponement.

That evening the proposed visit was made. The air was soft and hazy, and the white moon was sailing grandly in the heavens, shedding streams of mild, mellow light upon the ruins. It was strangely romantic. The blackened walls of the mansion; the tower, rising grimly above them like a silent sentinel; the sashless windows, through which shone the glimmering moonlight; the long shadow of the tower stretching across the lawn; a wide chasm, made by a partly-fallen wall; large projections of stone, which seemed to hang in the air, all conspired to give the place an appearance resembling the ruins of some old castle or monastery; and the blasted, leafless trees added not a little to the wild beauty of the scene.

"How ghostly it looks!" exclaimed Vida, a little tremor in her voice, a slight chill creeping through her body.

"You are not afraid, dear sister?"

"No; but I feel very queer. Are you sure there is nobody here but ourselves?"

"Why, who would be here at this hour?"

"I suppose it is imagination," said Vida, hesitatingly; "but I can't shake off the feeling; it is overpowering me."

"Nonsense, sister; but tell me, would you be much frightened if we really saw a spirit here?"

"Paul, how you talk! You know I don't believe——"

She stopped very suddenly; a conviction burst upon her, vague and dim, to be sure, something

like the echo of an inspired truth, but a conviction nevertheless. She looked Paul full in the face, but seeing there no reflection of the thought that had just rustled, as it were, through her brain, she gave a deep sigh, and, as she trembled visibly, Paul led her to a rustic seat close by. Being seated, she dropped into a reverie, profound and oblivious. When she raised her head Paul was not in sight. This circumstance gave her no alarm, as she thought he had wandered off and was lost in the shade of the ruins. Again she became convinced of the proximity of a presence; her heart began to beat violently, and she seemed unable to rise or speak. Presently she heard some one approaching, and, looking up, she beheld—not Paul, but the form and countenance of Richard Arbyght. Was it a vision? She knew not, neither did she fear; and then the apparition, if such it was, smiled sweetly and tenderly upon her as it came nearer, and directly, through every nerve of sensation in her body, there vibrated and thrilled the cadences of a loved and familiar voice :

“Fear not, dear Vida—oh, darling! at last we meet again.”

In the next instant two sorely-tried beings were united in a long, tearful, heavenly embrace. After the first burst of rapture, the mutual interjections and exclamations of love, they sat down, and Vida, with her head resting upon his shoulder, looked into eyes that reflected naught but love and devotion.

“How were you saved? How did it all happen?” were Vida’s first coherent words.

“I owe it all to Bertha,” said Richard; “she insisted that I should escape from prison, and then by some means have it appear that I died or was

killed ; to use her own words, it was necessary that I should die that I might live. She believed from the first that Mellen and Miller were not dead, and she rightly divined that should I escape and my death be afterward, to all appearances, successfully established, Mellen and Miller would come to life. I instinctively abhorred the idea of flight, and fought against it a long time, and, but for Bertha and you, my own loved darling, I would not have consented, and in all probability I would have been hanged, as money was more than a match for even-handed justice in my case. When the Morning Star went down I secured some loose lumber, which, with a life-preserver, kept me afloat until the wind drove me ashore near the spot where my supposed body was found. When I reached the beach I saw a body with hardly a shred of clothing and no evidence of identification—the body itself being mutilated beyond recognition ; and, as I knew it could not be identified, I had no scruples in using it to save my own life. You already know the rest.”

During this recital Vida's eyes filled with tears and she wept freely.

“ Oh, Richard ! how you have suffered ! we have both suffered much, very much. What do we not owe Bertha ? ” she said, after she had partly restrained her tears.

“ I indeed owe her much ; but, perhaps, it were better for you if I had died.”

“ Richard ! what can you mean ? ” gasped Vida, and the tears again flooded her eyes.

“ Oh ! Vida, you do not know all I have suffered and now suffer. I tried so hard to make a start in the world, to lay the foundation of a competence, to do something to win your father's confidence and esteem, and at the very outset my plans were

thwarted and I was disgraced. I shall never forget the awful anguish of soul I endured when that sea of faces turned upon me in the crowded courtroom, to be gazed and gaped at like a common felon, to be questioned by brutal, coarse, heartless lawyers, was a degradation, a laceration of soul I thought I could not survive."

"But, Richard, it is past now. Let us never refer to it again."

"Yes, but all this has widened the gulf between us," he replied, in a choking voice.

Vida looked at him keenly, and the lovely glow began to fade from her cheeks. The truth of the matter was, Richard was not aware of the change in Mr. Geldamo's fortunes. Paul had a little of the old family pride and was loth to acknowledge the depth of their fall.

"I cannot comprehend your meaning, Richard," she finally said, in a soft, low, tremulous voice.

"As heaven is my judge, Vida, I have never thought of you in a selfish sense, never thought of you but as the peerless being you are—far too good for any man, and I would sooner suffer all my life than transplant you to a position in life inferior to the one you now occupy. To lose your love, darling, will be death; it has been my life for the last year, the bright, pure, disinterested incentive of my ambition. I tried hard, heaven knows, and failed; I can try again, it is true; but it would be selfish to ask you to wait, and, moreover, it would be a sin to have you waste the best and brightest period of your life waiting for a man who feels he would be unworthy of you even with a fortune. Oh no, do not think of it; I am prepared to suffer myself, but I cannot, will not see you suffer."

“ Richard you talk of poverty—are you so very poor? Are you not rich in strength and health?” she asked through her fast falling tears, but there was a bright, calm smile upon her face.

“ I am indeed poor ; I have scarcely a dollar in the world ; what money I did have was swallowed up in lawyers’ fees, and fees we paid detectives for procuring evidence. I am a homeless wanderer, and the sooner I leave the city the better ”

A silence ensued. Vida looked at him curiously, then laid her head upon his shoulder again and her arm stole gently ’round his neck with a loving caressing movement, and looking up into his eyes archly and lovingly, she said :

“ How little you know me, Richard, if you think my love can be affected by any such argument. We are very poor, too ; but darling it would make no difference if I was the heiress you thought I was. All father’s fortune is gone ; he may save a portion of it, but it would not change me a particle if he recovered it all. Richard,” (in a timid, faltering voice) “ we can be happy without money, you know I will love you through life as I do now, as truly and as tenderly as woman ever loved man, and I am sure” (and her arm stole closer ’round his neck) “ while you have two strong arms and a good little wife to love and care for you and help you all she possibly can, you need not fear the battles of life. And if we are happy in the fulness of our love, ever devoted and attached to each other, sharing mutually our joys and sorrows, what need we care for wealth or the doubtful pleasures it brings?”

Drawing her within the circle of his strong arms, clasping her to his breast, he rained warm, passionate kisses upon her upturned lips, and in a voice tremulous with emotion said :

“Vida, my darling, you are more than mortal—you are an angel.”

“A guardian angel who proposes to watch over you, dear,” she said, as she kissed him in return, and then added chidingly, “and yet I had to almost coax you to take me.”

“If the labor of a whole life can repay you for the sacrifice you propose to make, it will be cheerfully given. Love you, Vida! I am the happiest man in this great city to-night. Am I not rich in unpurchasable love and inconceivable happiness? With your love, Vida, to cheer and guide me, I feel no obstacle insurmountable, no vicissitude of fortune implacable.”

A moving shadow was seen at this juncture by Vida, and she blushed like a rose, as she thought of Paul. It was the first time he entered her mind since Richard came upon the scene. When Paul joined them they were walking toward him, arm in arm.

“Well, Vida,” he said, with a mischievous twinkle in his eye, “this is not such a ghostly place after all.”

“It is a dear, delightful place,” she said boldly, and tried to look imperturbable. She failed, however, but succeeded in looking beautifully, bewitchingly confused.

The next morning when Vida came down to breakfast her father was struck with the wonderful change in her manner and appearance. The wrinkle had nearly disappeared from her forehead, and the little lines of grief and marks of agony could be seen on her face no more. She was all life—blooming life and animation.

CHAPTER XXXXV.

A STARTLING REVELATION.

Alvan Relvason was, what might be termed in the strictest sense of the word, a lucky man. The great desolation of flame that ruined thousands left him comparatively unharmed. The bulk of his property was located in the district not touched by fire. He had some very valuable buildings in the South Division, which were destroyed ; but his good fortune did not by any means desert him even there, as they were insured in responsible foreign companies. Still, Fortune is a fickle jade, and cannot be depended upon absolutely. There is no telling when she will desert and frown upon her most favored—those upon whom she was wont to shower her choicest benedictions. There is another peculiarity noticeable in the whimsical, eccentric phases of her ever-changing character : when Fortune does frown upon a man, her frown is inexorably relentless ; she seldom, if ever, smiles upon him again ; moreover, she may toy with and smile upon us all our lives, but in an instant, unexpected and unwarned, we are debarred forever from all participation in the favors she so lavishly bestowed.

A few weeks after the fire Magaw accidentally met Miss Estella Relvason at the house of a mutual lady friend, and, under the circumstances, an introduction was unavoidable. Miss Relvason was superbly if not extravagantly dressed. Among other devices to enhance her appearance, she wore around her neck a heavy and artistically-wrought gold chain, to which was attached an unusually large and costly gold cross, studded with diamonds. It was certainly a beautiful, magnificent jewel.

So thought Magaw when he first saw it ; no one could form any other opinion ; but there was something in the cross that riveted the attention and the gaze of the detective. There was something odd and peculiar about it which would, in all probability, escape the notice of the ordinary superficial observer ; but the detective was not one of that class. The strangeness or peculiarity arose from a want of uniformity in the diamonds, and in the gold or body of the cross. The diamonds in the arms of the jewel were of that pure, white, transparent variety, known as diamonds of the first water ; the diamonds in the other arm were not so pure nor so white, besides there was a slight difference in the color of the gold between that arm and the rest. There was also a difference in the refractive powers of some of the diamonds.

Magaw seemed very anxious to conciliate Miss Relvason, but she was chillingly cold, formal, repellent. He was, however, a close observer of human nature and knew full well that the direct, open road to a proud woman's heart or good graces lay through her vanity, and he took advantage of that knowledge.

"I am a passionate admirer of rare and exquisite jewelry," said Magaw, in an ingratiating voice, "but I must say I never saw anything so chastely beautiful, Miss Relvason, as that diamond cross." The lady smiled ; the words were gratifying to her vanity and pleased her greatly.

"Oh ! you are complimentary," she said, with the faintest touch of, I thank you, in her voice.

"But not unjustly so," replied Magaw.

"Papa bought it in New York many years ago and gave it to me for a Christmas present ; it is very old—came from France, I believe. When

papa bought it one of the arms was missing, and though he searched the whole city he could not obtain a diamond of the same variety."

"Yes; I noticed that, and no doubt you will think it strange when I tell you that I have the missing arm of that cross."

"Strange! of course I do; it can't be, it's impossible—but have you, though?"

Magaw produced the arm of a cross; it had three points at one end, the diamonds were of the same pure, white, brilliant variety, the workmanship and gold were exactly similar—in fact, there could be no mistake, it was the missing arm.

"I am delighted—I know papa will buy it of you—but how did you come by it?"

"It was given to me by a man who picked it up many years ago. He deemed it of no especial value, I suppose," replied Magaw.

"You will sell it?"

"Possibly," slowly answered the detective, "for a consideration few men would care to give," he added, with peculiar emphasis.

The next day this note was delivered to him by a servant:

WEDNESDAY, 30TH.

MR. MAGAW.

Dear Sir: My daughter informs me that you have in your possession the missing arm of a valuable cross, which I purchased years ago, minus said arm. I have serious doubts about the genuineness of the part you hold, but am willing to be convinced, and would esteem it a favor to have you call at my residence to-morrow evening. Will purchase the remnant, if genuine, at your terms. My servant will bring your reply.

*Yours, truly,
Chicago, Ill.*

ALVAN RELVASON.

To this note Magaw returned this answer :

WEDNESDAY, 30TH.

ALVAN RELVASON, ESQ.

Dear Sir: I am in receipt of your note of this date. If you desire to purchase the remnant you can call at my office at your convenience.

Respectfully,

W. P. MAGAW.

Chicago, Ill.

The following evening Mr. Relvason called upon the detective.

“Mr. Magaw, I believe?”

“I am so called ; you are Mr. Relvason, I presume?”

“I am, sir.”

“Pray, be seated,” said the detective, presenting a chair.

Relvason sat down quite close to a plain, hard-wood table, on which a few books, some papers, and a quantity of writing material were neatly and orderly arrayed. He sat quite close to the table because the chair had been placed there by the detective, who, taking another chair, sat down on the opposite side of the table—facing the visitor. The room was very scantily furnished, a few chairs, an ordinary lounge, and the table comprising all that could be seen. From this room a door opened into an inner or back room, which served the detective as a sleeping apartment. The door leading to this lonely and forbidding-looking dormitory was open, and Relvason sat opposite to it—his face toward it. The room was lighted by a small, metallic, kerosene lamp, having a paper shade on the chimney. The light was not very brilliant, but was sufficiently bright to

readily distinguish everything then in the room or anything likely to occur therein.

"You doubtless know why I am here?" said Relvason, in a pointed, business-like way, as if he wished to come directly to the object of his visit.

"I might possibly surmise the motive to which I can attribute the honor of your presence," replied Magaw, in a voice tinged with considerable latent sarcasm.

"Have you the missing arm of that cross with you?" asked Relvason, in a constrained tone.

"I have," answered the detective in an abrupt but firm voice.

Relvason's teeth glistened in the pale lamplight, but it would be difficult to say whether the answer pleased or angered him.

"Would you like to see it?"

"Certainly; otherwise I had not called."

Magaw drew a small parcel from his pocket and began to unfold it. Relvason's lips parted wider, the teeth shone more fiercely, and the shaggy eyebrows fell and rose nervously during the operation.

"There it is," said Magaw, placing the "arm" under the shade, where the rays of light fell full and strong upon it.

Relvason started as a man would were a gun fired unexpectedly and close to his ear. He uttered a vehement exclamation, seemingly of mingled surprise and alarm.

"By heavens, it is the missing arm!"

The detective noticed that his voice was slightly undulatory; it did not have the clear, uninterrupted flow or intonation peculiar to the speech of the man whose mind is at peace and ease.

"How—where did you obtain it?"

"It was given to me by a man who had no use for it, and who, perhaps, was not aware of its value."

"Well, I will not be particular how you came by it; how much do you want for it?"

Magaw leaned across the table, a fierce smile on his face, a direful fire in his eye; looking with mocking, scornful triumph at the would-be buyer, he hissed rather than spoke:

"Sixty thousand dollars, sir!"

"Sixty thousand devils——"

"Beg your pardon, sir," interrupted Magaw, "dollars, sir, dollars. I have no desire to discuss the numerical strength of Zamiel's legions, for just now the subject is dollars. Sixty thousand dollars is my price."

The detective spoke with cool soberness and with an imperturbable nonchalance, unbearably provoking.

Relvason had sprung to his feet, and his face presented an appearance frightful to look upon—fearful to contemplate.

"You must either be a madman or a fool!" he finally managed to say.

"Pray, be seated," replied Magaw, with mock gravity; let us talk the matter over."

The fearful emotions depicted upon the great employer's face gave place to a contemptuous sneer, and presently he broke into a loud, derisive laugh.

The detective stood up, eyed the man with a fixed intensity for a moment or two; then said with stern distinctness:

"Mr. Relvason, sit down."

There was something in the detective's look, something in his voice, which cowed the strong, haughty millionaire into enforced compliance.

"Well, what is your pleasure?" he ironically, sneeringly demanded, as he again sat down.

"You want this bauble," answered the detective, speaking very deliberately, "but its value

to me you underestimate. Perhaps my figures are high——”

“I should think so!” interposed Relvason, and he laughed a hollow, mocking laugh.

“That may be a matter of opinion,” replied the detective. “Our knowledge of this——”

“Arm,” suggested Relvason.

“Pardon me, sir; link is the word. Oh! you need not stare so. Why should you start or seem disturbed? The difference between a link and an arm should occasion you no uneasiness. I was saying, our knowledge of this missing link may not be the same, and the diversity of information respecting it may occasion our difference of opinion touching its value; but if I should give you all the knowledge I possess in connection with it, your views might, doubtless, be in a measure modified.”

“Man or idiot—I care not what you are—I want no more of your insinuations or innuendoes. I am ready to hear any revelation you have to make.”

The tyrannical employer was now as collected and soberly cool as the detective; apparently or externally so at least.

“It has a history. Would you like to hear it?”

“I will be delighted. Is it romantic?”

“Yes—very,” replied Magaw, taking no notice of the other’s assumed bravado. Then, eyeing Relvason as a panther eyes a victim, he continued: “Yes, singularly—I might say bloodily romantic. I fear the air is chilly, Mr. Relvason.”

“Never mind the air; I am subject to chills. Let us hear this wonderful and, doubtless, enchanting story.”

“Fifty years ago,” began the detective, “you were born near the little village of Silverville,

Pennsylvania. Your father, William Relvason, had married Mary Morris a year or so previously, and two years subsequently she died, after having given birth to your sister Edna, who died in Cleveland a few years since."

"Your knowledge of my family history is singularly accurate," said Relvason, with mock commendation.

"You will be better able to judge when I have finished," retorted the other. "Your mother," he continued, "when dying, left you the cross of which this arm is a part."

"Man or devil, who are you?" cried Relvason, losing for a moment his self-control.

"Your father," continued the detective, not noticing the interruption, "married again, and the result of the last marriage was Ethalind Relvason, who, in the course of time, married the youngest brother of your father's first wife. So it seems that you have an uncle and brother-in-law in the same person, and that man, Mr. Morris, now lives near the same village in sight of which you were born."

"But what has all this nonsensical verbiage to do with the manner in which you came into possession of this arm? You can spare yourself the trouble of reciting my family history; it is already familiar to me."

"You grew to be a man," pursued the detective, as calmly and indifferently as if Relvason had not spoken. "Your father died—of a broken heart. A financial panic—one of those safety-valves to a rotten financial policy—ruined him. You will, I hope, overlook this digression. After your father's death you were a penniless young man, with no aim in life except a desire to marry the beautiful Irene Adair——"

"Stop! I will hear no more; your impudence is insufferable," said Relvason, rising from his seat, "permit me to bid you good-night."

The detective again fastened his eyes upon his visitor.

"Mr. Relvason, you will hear more; you will hear all I have to say ere you leave this room. If you will not hear me, my story will be told to thousands who will be only too glad to listen."

"Go on," said Relvason, and, wrapping himself in his armor of dignity and assumed indifference, he sat down again.

"Irene Adair spurned your suit. She preferred another—the son of a Chicago merchant, whom she married. She lived happily with her husband, their wedded life being in reality a continued, unending honeymoon. Their married life was a perpetual love feast, not marred or clouded by a single regret or sorrow, except the decease of the wife's parents. And thus they lived until one terrible night the husband was——sit down, sir——was——be calm, sir, be calm——was murdered! most shockingly, foully, brutally murdered!"

"What is this to me?"

"Nothing, sir, I assure you. 'Let the galled jade wince, our withers are unwrung;' not only was he murdered, he was also robbed of twenty thousand dollars—his wife and children's inheritance, and now I come to the point where the story is connected with this trinket. Covered with blood, this piece of your cross was found upon the very spot where that man was murdered; and now, Alvan Relvason, I, the son of that man, yes, I"—flinging off his detective's disguise—"I, Richard Arbyght, brand you, Alvan Relvason, as the murderer of my father—yes, and my mother also, and the robber of our property!"

Both Relvason and Arbyght had arisen and were now facing each other—the workman a personified, maddening fury—the employer the embodied quintessence of rage indescribable. Arbyght's face glowed as if in burning fever, and his eyes shone with unwonted and unnatural brilliancy—seemed like incandescent carbon. Relvason's face was blanched and fearfully contorted, his eyes glared revenge, mischief, death.

“Liar, scoundrel, dog, die!” the employer fairly shrieked as he, with flashing rapidity, drew a revolver and fired at Arbyght, but the latter anticipated such a movement, as the light went out before the revolver was fairly out of Relvason's pocket, and though the ball passed directly over the spot on which he stood, it hit him not, because he was not there.

The echoes of the report had not more than begun to reverberate through the room ere Relvason uttered an appalling, prolonged shriek which terminated in a succession of choking gasps, as he fell on the table from which he rolled like an inert mass on the floor. He had seen a sight which had frozen his blood, frozen his heart into stillness. From the open door, leading to the sleeping apartment, a bright shadow or illuminated image of the murdered man seemed to advance toward the table. The features of the shade were vivid, plain and clearly distinct. So awful, thrilling, and apparently real was the scene that Richard, though he knew it was an illusion, could hardly disabuse his mind of an impression of genuineness. And yet it was only the production of a phantasmagoria lantern in the hands of Sergeant Soolfire, who was in the back room and had listened to all the conversation.

Richard had that day received a note from Rel-

vason to the effect that he would call upon him that evening. Arbyght had previously made Sool-fire a confidant of the secret discovery he had made the evening he first saw the cross on Estella Relvason, and the sergeant had undertaken to aid him in bringing the culprit to justice.

The lamp was again lighted, Relvason’s collar torn off, stimulants administered, and other restoratives applied, and in a few minutes he was so far restored to animation as to be removed to his carriage and driven home, a more wretched, if not a wiser man.

CHAPTER XLVI.

“A DEATH BED’S A DETECTOR OF THE HEART.”

The Marmane family consisted of father, mother, and daughter. Some years previously they had lived near Elgin, and were neighbors of Vida Geldamo’s family on her mother’s side, and from this circumstance arose the close and intimate friendship between Vida and Mary, as the former, during her school days, spent nearly all of her vacations in and around Elgin. Mary Marmane’s connection with the Geldamo family sprung from choice and not necessity, as Mr. Marmane was a well-to-do farmer. He was not wealthy—at least not in the estimation of the world—still, his land was productive, his stock numerous, and no incubus in the shape of debts or mortgages disturbed his peaceful serenity. He was as wealthy as he desired to be. As a general

rule, farmers are poor ; very few of them ever become burdened with a great share of this world's goods ; as a class they are independent, but not wealthy. Reliable statistical data teach us that the productions of the land—labor deducted—amount, per annum, to only about three per cent. of its value. But speculators, money lenders, bankers, and the gods of finance generally, demand eight, and even as much as ten per cent. for the use of money ; in other words, money increases on an average of nine per cent. The odds, therefore, against the farmer are three to one, and in this we find a reason why, as a class, they are not as wealthy as bankers and speculators. The interests of the farmers—being laborers—are identical with the interests of all workingmen.

Though raised on a farm, Mary Marmane possessed a delicacy of feeling, an educated refinement of mind not always found among the belles of *elite* society. Still in girlhood she was a wild, romping, happy, blooming child of nature, full of vim, vivacity, verve and life, delighting in out-door exercise and sports ; fond of roaming the wide fields, chasing butterflies and plucking wild flowers ; at home on a horse's back, and not afraid to ride even unbroken colts. As she grew older, she assumed the household duties—could bake, cook, or churn butter better than her mother, was a capital seamstress—made all her own dresses, arranged her own linen, and sometimes helped her father by keeping his accounts—in a word, she was never idle or unemployed ; and yet, amidst all these duties, she found time to read and study and become pretty well versed in all the needful modern arts and sciences. She could sing well ; could play the piano admirably, and could talk understandingly upon all ordinary topics. She had many suitors

for her hand, but was heart-free when she first pitied, then loved Oscar Wood.

When Mr. Geldamo and Vida left Chicago she went home to her parents and settled down to her old life. Her love for Oscar was her secret. She was at times sad and melancholy, but always hopeful. She loved in the abstract, platonically—the feeling we sometimes experience for a hero or heroine, the creation of some master mind; but the restoration of Oscar to sanity, and his presence under her father’s roof, suddenly changed the current of her thoughts, the course of her dreams. At first she was happy beyond measure. Her guileless soul seemed to already enjoy the bliss of the angels, but a cloud arose when she thought of this affection as it really was—a unitary love; she loved, but was her love returned? Custom and conventional tyranny, but more especially womanly delicacy, forbade her to seek his love or declare her own. Would she unsex herself by wooing him? Common-sense said no, but the refinement and delicacy of her womanhood said yes, and she crushed her swelling heart with a vice-like grip, and determined and resolved that no human being should, from her lips, learn of the love she bore Oscar Wood. Her family were already aware of his sad story, as she had imparted it to them, but they knew no more.

The homeless wanderers were now in good hands. Their future for the present would at least be cheered by the soothing presence and kindly deeds of sympathetic humanity. Little Amy was lovingly and tenderly cared for, but it was doubtful if any care, tenderness, or medical skill could now stay the ravages of the fell, consuming destroyer which had already fastened upon the pulsing mainspring of life. Her thin, transparent skin,

fair hair, rosy, delicate complexion, and extreme sensitiveness indicated a system constitutionally liable to consumption. In fact, this dread disease had already planted in her lungs the tubercular germs of dissolving life, and the fatigue and exhaustion experienced since she left the asylum, followed by the severe drenching, brought on an acute attack of lung fever, which developed the disease in all its fury and virulence. Still, the physician was hopeful; thought a change of climate would effect a cure, but it was necessary that she be so far restored as to be able to withstand the travel.

Oscar was for the first few days quite weak—unable to leave his room. On the fourth morning he awoke very much refreshed and feeling quite strong. The sun had just arisen, and the large room was filled with golden, mellow sunlight. He arose, dressed himself, and tried to think it all over as he sat in a large arm-chair which he drew to a window facing the velvety lawn. He thought and pondered for some time. What would he do? What could he do? Certainly, not leave his little sister. He knew the doctor had been there night and morning since they came. No, he could not do that, but then his proud spirit rebelled at the idea of being a burden to these good people under whose kindly protection Providence seemed to have placed them. What would he do? Glancing out of the window, he beheld Mary Marmane upon the little rustic bridge, gazing, as she did when he first saw her, dreamily into the glassy, gurgling, ever-moving mirror. What would he do? Go to her? Yes, though he knew not why. When he first saw her she was plainly attired, but whatever of artificial adornment she wore then, she wore none now—an unassuming morning dress, plain but

neat, linen collar and cuffs—there she stood, her hair floating in the light breeze of that September morning, a slightly obscured Hebe or Pandora, her only adornment her natural beauty, crowned with a loveliness which—

"Needs not the foreign aid of ornament,
But is when unadorn'd adorn'd the most."

"Pardon me, Miss Marmane, if I intrude, but seeing you here, I thought I would speak to you about my—about Amy," were the words Oscar mildly spoke as he came up hat in hand.

Mary quivered slightly and did not look up immediately; when she did the little tinge of crimson which had darted into her face was slowly fading away.

"I am glad to see you so well, Mr. Wood," she replied.

"I must thank my kind benefactors for that," he answered very gratefully.

Mary was one of those beings who do good for its own sake, and who feel more than rewarded by the consciousness of having performed a meritorious act.

"Mr. Wood, do you like selfish people?"

"No," stammered Oscar in surprise.

"Selfish people live and work for reward, and thanks are a reward for service. Whatever you may think of us, do not think us selfish."

"Yes; but, Miss Marmane, would it not be base ingratitude—the worst form of selfishness—on my part to be oblivious to all that has been done for us?"

"You need not be oblivious or unthankful, for your appreciation will be observed without formal expression; they who would refuse to give of God's store to God's suffering children, are not fit to

bear the image of Him whose mercy and justice they abuse. But come, Amy will be glad to see you," and silently they wended their way to her bedside.

She was awake when they entered the room, and her face and eyes showed how pleased she was because they came. The physician had the lung fever pretty well under control, but the fever inseparably connected with the disease was beginning to manifest itself; her pulse and breathing were very hurried. But what struck and appalled Oscar was the thin, sharp, emaciated appearance of her face.

"How did you spend the night, Amy?" asked Oscar after he had kissed her tenderly.

"Very well. I was not lonely, I had such blissful dreams or visions; mother was here, dear Oscar, with a great many angels; their brightness filled the room with heavenly light. They will come again to-night, and mother said they would come another time and take me home."

Oscar hung his head and sobbed aloud. Mary left the room, but came back presently and said to Oscar that breakfast was being served. Though he felt like anything but eating he arose and mechanically followed her to the dining-room, where she left him and returned to Amy.

"You must not talk so to Oscar, at least not for the present," she said, a little reprovingly.

"I am sorry for Oscar," Amy replied.

"Are you sorry for him?" she asked Mary, after a pause.

Mary was slightly amazed by the question, but she answered in the affirmative.

"You are so good," said Amy, "you are all good. May I call you sister?"

"Why of course you may," cried Mary, in a

burst of tears, "you know we are all children of one Father," she added, as she kissed the child over and over again.

"And will you be Oscar's sister, too?" she asked, very coaxingly. For answer Mary kissed her again and left the room with a swelling heart.

After Oscar had moodily swallowed his breakfast he went out on the lawn again to think it out. In a short time he was joined by Mr. Marmane, who made him this proposition :

"I have been looking for some time for a man to take my place on the farm ; I am growing old, and I want to secure a good, reliable man to act as overseer, and I think you will suit me capitally ; if you will try it one year I assure you we will not quarrel over the compensation."

Oscar thankfully accepted the old man's offer, and said he would begin immediately, and thus it was settled.

As the days went by, the old folks became more and more attached to Oscar. He was so gentle, kind, and amiable, and withal so wise and provident, that he completely won their hearts. He was the theme of every gossiping tongue in the neighborhood ; but, strange to say, no one spoke an unkind or disparaging word of him, and, as every one praised him, the Marmanes grew fonder and prouder of him.

A month had rolled away ; Mary's love had, day by day, grown stronger ; it filled her soul and became the bright hope of her young life, but still there was no outward sign that Oscar Wood was more to her than any of her numerous suitors. He was not a suitor, though he loved her madly from the first. But, like all noble-hearted men, he was humble, and thought her too good, too wise, too refined for him ; and then, again, he be-

lieved it would be infamously ungrateful to fall in love with his benefactor's daughter, at least not until he felt assured his love would be returned.

Men, however, may not declare their love in words, but they can illy conceal it from an observing woman. Mary was not long in divining that her love was reciprocated. Every word that Oscar uttered, every glance he gave her, spoke to her soul the language of love, and hence it was her star of hope.

Meanwhile Amy was slowly but surely eking out the sands of her earthly existence. Her countenance had grown more emaciated, her breath and pulse more hurried; the cheeks were now very prominent, the eyes hollow and languid. But, through all this suffering, her mind remained clear and active. Mary was seldom from her side, and the old folks were all a father and mother could be.

Time flew on; October came, the leaves began to fall, the death song of the flowers—

“The melancholy days are come,
The saddest of the year—”

was being sung by rustling leaves and autumn winds; Amy had grown much worse. One bright afternoon she sent for Oscar, and with a heavy heart he went to her bedside.

Mary was singing one of Moore's melodies, a favorite of Amy's mother, when Oscar entered. The air and words had a powerful effect on him; they brought him back to the days when Amy, his mother, and himself were happy in their Canadian home.

“It was to please me she sang it,” said Amy, “you are not displeased, Oscar?”

“Why no, little angel, I am only sad,” he answered, seating himself by her side.

“Sister Mary, I would like to sit up for just a moment,” said Amy.

Mary took the little thing in her arms and tenderly placed her in a large-armed rocking chair, in which a number of pillows were arranged. Oscar was seated on one side of the big chair and Mary on the other.

“Sister Mary, give me your hand ; Oscar, give me yours.” They complied. “I will leave you very soon,” she continued. “You may have deceived each other, but you have not deceived little Amy ; you love sister Mary, Oscar, and sister Mary loves you, and as I love you both, I will not go home until you are married.”

She placed Mary’s hand in Oscar’s, and then leaned back among the pillows. The lovers arose and looked timidly, but lovingly, at each other ; they were quivering from head to foot and blushing like peonies.

“Mary, you know I love you ; is there any hope for me ?” pleaded Oscar.

She still held him by the hand, but the only answer to his question was a tightening of the fingers, as she led him toward the parlor where her father and mother were discussing some project. She knelt before them and Oscar knelt by her side.

The old folks were much surprised—amazed. But it was a pleasing surprise, for as soon as they comprehended the situation, they blessed them, kissed them, and cried over them, and then went and kissed and blessed Amy, and were supremely happy.

Amy now insisted that the marriage should take place immediately. In vain they told her she might live months, and there was no need of such haste, but she begged, and coaxed, and pleaded so softly and sadly that they had not the heart to refuse her.

“Every thing in life is so uncertain,” she said, “something might part you,” and then the poor child began to cry, and so affected the old folks that they declared the ceremony should take place at once.

They were married that very evening, and Amy, dressed in white muslin, a bunch of wild flowers on her breast, and a wreath of garden flowers on her head, was propped up in her big arm-chair and acted as bridesmaid.

When the man of God had ended, the happy lovers turned first to little Amy. A serene, pleased smile illumined her thin, worn features. Turning her lustrous eyes toward Mary, she said in a low, plaintive voice :

“Sister Mary, I am so happy, so very happy, and my heart is full of joy.” Her eyelids drooped and closed for a moment, and when they opened again, she continued in a lower tone, “dear sister, I am tired, so very tired; put me to bed now, my eyes are so heavy, I want to sleep.” Oscar raised her carefully and tenderly, carried her to her room and gently laid her upon the bed.

“Where is sister Mary?”

“I am here, Amy.”

“Oscar, you must always love sister Mary and be good to her,” she said in a whisper as she placed her hand softly in his.

“Sister Mary?”

“Yes, dear.”

“My head is too high—there, that will do, sister; kiss me now and I will go to sleep.” Mary kissed her eyelids down while Amy repeated in voice scarcely audible :

“Now I lay me down to sleep,
I pray the Lord my soul to keep;
If I should die before I wake,
I pray the Lord my soul to take.”

The lips ceased to move, and no sound save half-suppressed sobs was heard in the room. Amy's hands were crossed upon her breast, and she slept as gently and peacefully as a child. Presently her lips began to move, and Mary, bending low over her, thought she heard her say: "Oh! how bright the light is!"—but the voice grew so faint that she heard no more. She continued to sleep calmly and naturally; occasionally a heavenly smile glorified her pallid face, and her lips moved slightly, but her eyes remained closed.

"They watched her breathing through the night,
Her breathing soft and low;
As in her breast the wave of life
Kept heaving to and fro.

Their very hopes belied their fears,
Their fears their hopes belied;
They thought her dying when she slept,
And sleeping when she died."

And thus she fell asleep, thus she slept till awakened by the angels in the morning of a bright, unending day.

CHAPTER XLVII.

CASTAWAY MEETS ARBYGHT.

"Hello! Arbyght, I'm glad to see you. Allow me to congratulate you. Oh! you need not look surprised; the boys all know it; they will be around here in delegations pretty soon to wish you the joy and happiness you so richly deserve——"

"Why, Castaway, where have you been? I haven't seen you for a long time."

“ Oh ! I’ve been east in Ohio——”

“ I thought you had concluded to settle down,” interrupted Arbyght.

“ That’s just it, old fellow ; I’m moored at last ; been down to Ohio for the anchor—secured it, too—though the gender is not neuter ; congratulations are in order, my friend——”

“ I’m more than pleased to hear it ; but who is she, Castaway ?”

“ Now, Dick, you must not laugh, but it’s Ranie.”

“ What ! the old flame—your first love, Tom ?”

“ Yes, Dick. You see, I met her accidentally, about two months ago, and all was explained. You must come ’round and see us. She is just as handsome as ever ; the same old roguish smile plays around her mouth ; the same merry twinkle sparkles in her eye ; she has the most lovable disposition, and is the strangest compound of womanly dignity and girlish gaiety you ever saw. Oh ! I had to succumb ; I couldn’t help it ; I surrendered gracefully, and find the yoke of bondage not only light but deliciously pleasant.”

“ But how about that simile of the cluster ring ?” asked Richard, laughingly.

“ That is a good simile, Dick ; but you see it don’t apply in this case ; I thought it did, but I was mistaken. The fact is, men are unreasonable in these matters. All women are fond of admiration. If men admire them and pay them attentions they can not always prevent it without appearing rude. Just think of a man treating every lady he met discourteously, simply because he was engaged. Why, just before we were married I received a little note from Ranie, which reads :

“ ‘ MY OWN TOM :

“ ‘ I have thought of you, darling, every mo-

ment since you left me, and loved you with a love that shall be always fresh and new. What greater torture could be inflicted upon a loving heart than to be separated from the object of its love? You often speak of being jealous of me, dear. Having known your love, Tom, *could* I ever love another? Even the thought is loathsome. You are the only star in my heaven. I am yours always, darling, heart, and soul and life. Better than ever before I love you, Tom. May God make me what I should be for your sake.

“ ‘RANIE.’ ”

“ I tell you, Dick, none but a good, true girl could write a note like that.”

“ I beg your pardon, Tom, I did not mean anything by the remark ; I am, indeed, glad to hear of your good fortune, and will be pleased to meet your wife ; and, as you seem to know that I am to be married, I hope you and Mrs. Castaway will find it agreeable to call upon us when we are settled.”

“ Thank you, Arbyght, we will most certainly do so. But, Dick, you are a lucky man, after all. Every one says Miss Geldamo is the sweetest girl in the city. You know I met her at the hospital one day. As the poet says, she has a voice with a tear in it——”

“ There, there, Tom ; that will do ; I am a very happy man ; my cup of joy is full, the clouds have passed away, and the future seems very bright indeed ; but, Castaway, I suppose we will have to erect that brazen cenotaph——”

“ Never mind that, Dick ; I knew you would not forget it ; but I can assure you I would not have thought of getting married if Mr. Fargood had not promised to retain me until I was admitted to the profit-sharing class.”

"What a pity all employers are not like Fargoood," said Arbygth, regretfully.

"Indeed it is," replied Castaway, "and the strangest thing about it is," he continued, "that they can't see that Fargoood's course is the best even when regarded from a selfish standpoint, for although his men really work but eight hours per day, and receive twenty per cent. of the net profits besides, yet Mr. Fargoood realizes more upon his investment than any capitalist in the city."

"That is not strange, Tom; his works are always running, his ware is the best made and commands the highest market price; there is no waste, because the men in the profit-sharing class—and most of them are in that class—are really partners, and though the hours of labor have been reduced, as a matter of fact production has been increased; but besides all that the real secret of his success lies in the fact that light hearts prompt, and intelligent brains guide the action of willing hands."

"You are right, Arbygth, the man who is imbruted by long hours of toil and poor food has no more interest in his work than the convict has in his task; the dressmaker tires and grows weary over her labor; but the woman who makes and fashions a dress for herself does not tire of the task, because her mind is filled with pleasant thoughts; the garment is her own, and while she plies the needle she sees her form arrayed in its beautiful folds."

"Yes," answered Arbygth, "the capitalist is short-sighted who does not understand that educated, happy, contented workmen are more productive, as well as being safer and better citizens, than laborers whom natural wages have dwarfed into mere machines."

"It is strange, indeed, Dick, that the world does

not apply to this matter the common sense that it does, say to breeding stock. Just think of a dray-horse being entered in a race against Dexter. Why, if we were to give to animals only the credit we give to men, the man who owned the stable would be entitled to more praise for endurance and fleetness than the horse that won the race. But what do you think will be the outcome of all this agitation?"

"Well, Tom, I am full of hope for the future, though the problem may not be solved in our day. The solution will be wrought out through education, organization and the action of social forces."

"Why not organization and education?"

"Because organization, without education, is like a locomotive without an engineer."

"The force would exist, but there would be no guiding thought to direct it; that's what you mean, Dick?"

"Precisely, Tom; organization, as a factor in the labor movement, involves the principle of moral force; and force of any kind which rights a social wrong means revolution; and a revolution in the sphere of matter, to be successful, must be preceded by a revolution in the realm of mind. Of course, organization will direct attention to the necessity for, and aid in, a more liberal diffusion of knowledge, but organization will never be effective until education is more general and perfect."

"Yes, I can clearly see the necessity for education," said Castaway; "for instance, the great trouble in labor organizations is lack of stability, cohesion, and patience. A union is no sooner formed than the members insist that prices shall be advanced and conditions be improved at once. They seem to forget that

'The patient dent and powder shock
Will blast an empire like a rock;'

or, rather, they do not comprehend the full import of these lines, for they immediately begin to drill holes in the empire of selfishness, and with no regard for the patient dent, in goes the powder, with the inevitable result, a 'flash in the pan,' but instead of the empire's being blasted, the union is shattered by the recoil; they organize quickly, go up like a rocket, but come down like a stick because they lack the stability and cohesion, which can only be secured by intelligent and thorough organization."

"Then again," said Arbyght, "wage-laborers must rely more upon self-effort and their own power and good judgment, than upon the promises of politicians or the advice of hot-headed leaders."

"That's true, Arbyght; it is really astonishing how quickly some so-called statesmen discover that labor has grievances which ought to be redressed, when they learn that a powerful union has been organized in their district. It is as easy for one of this class to talk eloquently, but insincerely, upon the iniquity of the wage-system as it is to vote for subsidies and laws in the interest of monopolies, or build blocks of houses with the meager or nominal salary received by a member of the common council of a city of the second class."

"Such men may keep the word of promise to the ear of labor, but they will break it to its hope. They are simply demagogues. The man who has lived all his life on politics is poor material for a genuine labor reformer," said Arbyght.

"But how do they manage to so successfully deceive the people and keep themselves in office?" inquired Castaway.

"Simply enough," responded Arbyght, "they are well equipped in all the essentials of the demagogue—smooth, oily speech, the ability to make

deceit and falsehood appear candor and truth, an abundance of impudence and cheek, and a certain order of cunning which is often mistaken for genius. By a shrewd application of these qualifications, and a small expenditure of money to subsidize such newspaper reporters as are willing, for a consideration, to disgrace a noble profession, they manage for a time to ride upon the topmost wave of popular applause; but the public, sooner or later, estimate them at their real value, and relegates them to the obscurity out of which they issued."

"But what do you think of arbitration?" asked Castaway.

"It will come into general use when capitalists become more intelligent and humane, or when they learn that labor is so thoroughly and intelligently organized as to be able to enforce any demand public opinion would sustain.

"The reason why arbitration is not more generally invoked at present is, the employer and the employé are suspicious and distrustful of each other; a spirit of mutual forbearance and conciliation must be cultivated; each must bear in mind, at all times, that there are two sides to every controversy, and that in case of difficulty it is the part of wisdom to change places and view the issues in dispute, in all their bearings, from opposite directions. If this were done in every instance with an honest determination to act justly there would be less friction and less trouble."

"And strikes?" asked Castaway.

"Strikes," answered Arbyght, "are a relic of barbarism, but they would not exist in this age unless some, at least, of the conditions out of which they first grew existed. They are, in fact, revolutionary; so, also, are the acts of monopolies and syndicates who wreck railroads, absorb the pub-

lic domain, and in various ways rob and plunder the people. The truth is, society has been from the beginning in a state of warfare, but out of this conflict has been evolved every advance in intelligence, freedom of thought and action, and material prosperity. The warfare will continue until man reaches the highest plane of social and mental progress of which he is capable ; and by organization and the diffusion of knowledge we but ameliorate conditions and hasten by peaceable means an end which will in any event be reached, though, perhaps, through the agency of material force and violence, a solution to be deprecated by the statesman, the patriot and humanitarian."

"I think you are right, Arbyght ; this conflict must go on ; we can only aid the natural forces in society by agitation, the enactment of wise and the repeal of unjust laws ; and yet it seems to me that the strike has not been given its full measure of credit as a warring social force. Some ten years ago a great strike came under my personal observation ; a thousand men stopped work and suffered and starved like martyrs for six months and were finally beaten in the struggle, but there has been no trouble in that establishment since ; all differences are now arbitrated ; both the employers and the men now think that although the amount they paid for their lesson in experience was large, yet they have been fully repaid ; both sides fear and dread another such strike and are always willing to come together when differences arise and amicably adjust them."

"You are quite right, Tom ; but, by the way, I read your interview in the *Voice of the Press* during the railway strike. It interested me much, though, I think, you did not fully elucidate one point."

"Which one?"

"Don't you think the natural differences between men to which you referred will eventually disappear?"

"Not entirely," replied Castaway. "The socialists," he continued, "contend that these natural differences are the result of present social differences; but the fact is, social differences first sprung from natural differences, though it must be admitted that the latter are now fearfully augmented by reason of the former; yet, to admit that the time will come when all men will be equal in physical, moral and mental power is to admit that it is possible to eliminate from the earth, sin and disease and replace the race again in the Garden of Eden."

"But is it not true, Tom, that better social conditions would result in improved types of physical and intellectual manhood?"

"Certainly, Dick; but there is undoubtedly a point beyond which the race can not be improved—where evolution must stop—and when that point is reached it will be found that there will still exist natural differences between men."

"Why so?"

"Do you think it possible to destroy sin?"

"No."

"And from sin spring excesses and disease?"

"Yes."

"There will always be cities?"

"Unquestionably."

"Urban life, agricultural pursuits, pure air and healthy exercise produce the best types of physical development?"

"That goes without saying."

"A sound mind generally exists in a sound body?"

“ True.”

“ The vine that produces delicious wine in France, if transplanted to American soil will not produce the same results?”

“ No, that’s admitted.”

“ And climatic conditions affect animal as well as vegetable life?”

“ That can not be denied, Tom.”

“ Well, then,” said Tom, by way of clinching the argument, “ while these conditions continue, while the human organism is liable to be impaired by excesses, sickness, or disease of any kind, the laws of procreation, which are immutable, will produce human beings of unequal physical and mental power. In trying to reach the millennium by this path the socialists will be lost in the wilderness of folly and fallacy; and it is because I am fully impressed with the truth of this position that I believe co-operation, as we understand that term, will never accomplish more than temporary relief. The ignorant and improvident generally, by some means, forfeit their share or stock in the enterprise to the wise and the prudent.”

“ You are on the right track, Castaway; I merely wanted your views upon the subject. I can see no way to a better environment except by the means we have already discussed. My only fear is that when the organizations of labor become so potent as to attract attention, the politician and others, actuated by selfish motives only, will crowd into and cripple them; but this is a lesson in experience, which must be learned in order to be avoided in a future wherein organization will be intelligent and perfect.”

“ I have thought of that, Arbyght. We can only be vigilant and hope for the best; but I must go. Mr. Fargood gives an entertainment to his men

this evening, and I have promised to take Ranie. If I don't put in an appearance pretty soon the poor child will think I have fallen over a bridge or lost my way in this big city."

And Castaway started off briskly, laughing heartily.

CHAPTER XLVIII.

"MURDER, THOUGH IT HAVE NO TONGUE, WILL SPEAK."

"I am satisfied in my own mind, from to-night's experience," said Sergeant Soolfire, "that Relvason murdered and robbed your father, but how to convince a jury of that fact does not seem so apparent."

"There's the rub, Sergeant," replied Richard. "The more I study it, the further I seem from a solution of the difficulty."

This conversation occurred in the detective's office between Soolfire and Arbyght, after Relvason had been placed in his carriage.

"You mentioned a man in California. Would his evidence amount to anything?" asked the sergeant.

"His evidence would be mainly circumstantial. The night the deed was committed this man, Hunter, left his home for the West. His father went with him, or rather drove him to the nearest railway station, to reach which they had to travel over the road and very spot on which my father was murdered, and about sixty rods beyond the place where the body was found they saw a man

running down the road before them. A little further on they passed him as he was turning off the road into a pasture, where they saw him endeavoring to secure a saddled and bridled horse. An hour after the same man passed them on horseback. They marked both rider and horse well, and when they reached the town they again saw the same man at the livery where the old man stabled his team. Seen by daylight, the man proved to be Alvan Relvason. Hunter knew him well. The horse he rode belonged to Mr. Morris, and was left at the stable to be taken home. Hunter feels satisfied that Relvason is the man, and says he will swear positively to these facts. Still, I doubt if, as evidence, it would be of any significant value."

"Taken alone," replied Soolfire, "it would not avail much. Still, it is a very criminating circumstance. A few more like it would convict him."

"There is another matter which in some mysterious manner seems to be connected with this case," answered Richard, "or at least has some bearing upon it. I will tell you what it is, and probably you may see further into it than I can, for I must confess it puzzles me. When I first came to the city I stopped at the Nevada House, but had hardly taken possession of my room ere I was called upon by a very seedy-looking individual, whose very appearance and presence filled me with an indescribable horror and loathing. When he told me his name—Jack Terwillager—I was somewhat surprised, as I had heard it frequently before from my mother, as a man of that name was at one time employed on the old farm, and was one of the men who brought my father's body home. When I asked him if he had ever lived in Silverville he

changed color and seemed visibly disturbed, and when I told him my father had at one time a man of that name in his employ, he rushed from the room, exclaiming audibly, "'Tis him; 'tis him!" His conduct amazed me, and presently it struck me that he knew something of the murder and robbery, and I followed him down stairs, but could obtain no trace of him. Now comes the most singular part of this story: I, no later than last night, saw that man prowling around Relvason's house."

"This is really a strange story," mused the sergeant; "it is mysterious, but I think there is more than a little in it. This man Terwillager must be found."

"I tried to approach him last night when I saw him, but he eluded me. I afterward learned that Relvason was out and it now strikes me that Terwillager was waiting to intercept him, or waiting to see him."

A silence ensued.

"Ha!" ejaculated the sergeant, very abruptly, "let me see," he continued. "A year ago last spring the department had information concerning a Terwillager, who, it was claimed, was passing counterfeit money. By my soul, I think there is something in it and I will find out before I am much older," and, rising, the sergeant terminated his interview by bidding Arbyght good-night.

"Will call to-morrow afternoon," he said at the door, "at three."

* * * * *

"I see you are punctual and prompt," said Arbyght, smiling, as Soolfire walked into his office the following afternoon at three o'clock, sharp.

"I have just dropped in; I can stay but a moment. I have discovered that the information

against Terwillager was lodged by Relvason—something devilish queer in that. Think I have evidence of the man's tracks. Will see you again," and before Richard could say a word he was gone.

About ten o'clock that evening the sergeant called again.

"Well?" said Richard, embodying in the expletive by voice and look a host of questions.

Soolfire sat down and seemed decidedly non-plussed.

"I was never so fairly eluded—cheated—in my life. I have been following that man since six o'clock. I tracked him to Abaddon Hall, thence to Relvason's private office, thence to the North Side and back to Relvason's office, thence down Lake street, and may I never die if he did not elude me—at least, I lost sight of him in some of the depots. And it seems I was not the only man anxious about his welfare, as he was also dogged by three men since he left Relvason's office the last time, and I hardly think they are particularly anxious for his welfare."

"What can it mean?"

"To my mind it means simply this," replied Soolfire, "the man is endeavoring to blackmail Relvason and the latter wants him out of the way—hushed up—killed. We must not let them head us off. Come, put on your hat and let us go together. My eyes are not as good as they used to be; if they were I had not lost him."

Richard complied, and they were soon on the street. But though they visited the depots and every other locality or place in which he might be likely to rendezvous, they failed to obtain a glimpse of him or any clue to his whereabouts.

"Perhaps he has left the city," suggested Arbyght.

"Don't think it," curtly answered the enraged Soolfire.

Disgusted and worn out they resolved to go home, and thitherward their steps they turned. They walked along in silence until they came to the corner of Franklin and Washington streets, when suddenly Soolfire seized Arbygth fiercely by the arm.

"See! see!" he whispered.

"What?" asked Richard in surprise.

"Are you blind? That man going toward the tunnel? It is Terwillager! Come, walk fast, we will overtake him before he reaches the opposite opening."

They trotted along briskly, reached the tunnel, went down, passed rapidly through the lonely, somber, vault-like passage, came up into the relief-giving air on the opposite side, but saw him not. Seeing a patrolman near the opening, the sergeant asked if a man had just passed from the tunnel. The officer shook his head.

"No?" exclaimed Soolfire.

"You are the first that came through for the last ten minutes," shiveringly replied the patrolman.

Soolfire looked at Arbygth, and he looked at Soolfire.

"Three men went down just before you came up," remarked the patrolman abstractedly.

"How long before we came up?" eagerly asked the sergeant.

"About two minutes, I should judge."

"Got it!" ejaculated Soolfire, starting up the street. Stopping quickly, he ordered the patrolman to follow him. When the sergeant reached the point where the wagon-way of the tunnel merges into the street, he turned and went briskly back along the wagon-passage into the tunnel.

The other two followed as fast as they could, but he maintained the lead. Midway in the tunnel there are two or three openings from the foot corridor or passage to the wagon-way, and beneath one of these openings—the foot passage is some feet higher than the bed of the wagon-way—they found the body of Jack Terwillager covered with blood, and, to all appearances, dead. His right hand was thrust between his vest and shirt, and when it was withdrawn by the sergeant, it was found that the clinched fingers grasped an old, well-worn wallet or pocket-book.

“There is a secret in that wallet for which you lost your life—it can't be money,” said the sergeant, feeling the wallet, as he calmly looked upon the blanched face of the dead.

The fingers were unloosed and the wallet partly removed, when the fingers again closed convulsively and half the pocket-book remained in the hands of the sergeant, the balance in the clinched hand of the supposed corpse. As it came apart, a dirty, piece of paper fell to the pavement.

Richard stooped, picked it up, and was about to hand it to the sergeant, when happening to glance at it, he suddenly stopped, approached a gas-jet, and hurriedly scanned it.

“What is it?” asked Soolfire.

“Something astoundingly important, can't rightly make it out—my sight seems scattered—my eyes swim.”

“Give it to me,” said the sergeant, as he took it from his trembling hand, and going closer to the jet, his astonished eyes fell upon a diary leaf, of which the following is a fac-simile:

The sergeant first gasped a surprised exclamation, then uttered a prolonged whistle.

"Well worth the hunt—by my soul it's worth a life—worth sixty thousand dollars, my boy!" slapping Arbyght on the back; "the mills of the gods grind slowly but they do grind ——" a groan from Terwillager, "what, not dead? so much the better, your evidence will make matters much plainer and conviction doubly sure. Here, my boy, take good care of that," he concluded, as he handed the paper to Richard, who, though not clearly aware of all it contained, was, nevertheless, alive to the importance of its preservation.

Terwillager was carried out of the tunnel, thence to the nearest police station where his wounds—two stabs in the breast and one in the right cheek—were dressed and the man otherwise provided for. He was soon able to talk rationally and gave a full account of the transaction.

"I found that paper," he said, in the right hand of my murdered master. My first thought was justice to the family, but then the devil entered my soul and I concluded to make Relvason pay a good round sum for it. For many years I failed to find him, and when I finally succeeded, I found he was a tough customer. He paid me a thousand dollars on three occasions, and about eighteen months ago I drew on him for another thousand, of which more than half was counterfeit, for passing which I was forced to fly from the city. But I returned a few days ago and demanded three thousand dollars. I made the demand following this encounter with the son of his victim, and so terrified him, by threatening to go to Arbyght, that he promised to comply and appointed a rendezvous, whither I was going at the time I was attacked. Why I was not killed outright

and the paper taken is a matter of surprise to me."

"I think I can account for it," said the sergeant, "we must have entered the tunnel about the time you encountered the assassins, and as we were running they no doubt heard us coming, and the fear of capture or detection drove them from their uncompleted task."

"I think you are right," he replied, "I did hear some one following me and the fellows did seem half inclined to let me pass."

"Do you think Relvason employed those men?"

"I am sure of it; I know I was followed and dogged; he must have had nearly a dozen men after me as I eluded two gangs and thought there could be no more, hence I was off my guard when attacked."

About ten o'clock the following morning Soolfire and Lanspear called upon Richard, whom they found in a very brown study.

"Why, Arbyght, what's up now?" asked Soolfire.

"Well, Sergeant, the truth of the matter is, I feel like a man who had suddenly gained a prize for which he had struggled long and hard, but who finds that actual possession detracts very materially from the pleasure which he expected to derive from that for which he so assiduously labored. Now that Relvason is really in my power, half the vindictiveness and desire for revenge has left me. In fact, I am at loss how to proceed. Justice must be done; but can I insist upon justice without seeming revengeful?"

"My dear fellow, you need not trouble yourself about these abstract points of justice; for a higher power has superseded an earthly tribunal in this case, and Alvan Relvason will answer for his crime before the bar of eternal judgment."

“What! dead?” said Richard, in a startled, questioning tone.

“Yes; he is dead. After leaving you last night I took the precaution to have police officers in citizens’ clothes stationed around Relvason’s house, at such a distance as to avoid suspicion, so as to prevent his escape. This morning, as soon as I could procure the proper affidavit, I proceeded to effect his arrest. When I reached his house, I found him dead. The morning papers contained a full and accurate account of the attempt to murder Terwillager. When Relvason came to breakfast, he called for the morning papers, as was his custom, and, as soon as he opened one of the papers, he became deathly pale, jumped up from the table, his face flushed up and turned a purplish hue, his eyes bulged out, and then he fell violently back upon the floor, and died before medical assistance could be had. Death was caused either by apoplexy or the bursting of a blood vessel.”

Richard, Lanspear, and Soolfire now held a short conference as to the proper course to pursue in this new turn of affairs, and it was finally decided to allow Lanspear to act as he thought best in the premises.

Relvason having made no will, an administrator was appointed, who took charge of the estate. Shortly after his appointment, Lanspear called upon him and laid before him the proofs they had of Relvason’s having murdered and robbed Mr. Arbyght, and told him they proposed to proceed against the estate at once, unless the matter was settled. The administrator, after a consultation with his counsel, concluded to accede to the demand made by Lanspear, and paid Arbyght sixty thousand dollars in full settlement of the amount stolen,

and interest for twenty-five years and the legacy willed Bertha by Edna Relvason.

Sergeant Soolfire called upon Richard the morning the settlement was made, about an hour after its consummation.

"I congratulate you, old fellow," said the sergeant; "and I hope you will have all the good luck you deserve in the future and live to enjoy many happy days."

"But how will I ever," said Richard, grasping his hand, "how can I ever repay you for all you have done for me? You have, indeed, been to me a true friend." And the strong man's eyes grew moist with tears as he shook the hand of the kind, noble-hearted sergeant.

The sergeant left shortly afterward, and Richard was alone. He pondered and thought and meditated a long time. He could hardly realize the turn affairs had taken. The poet who said that "Grief treads upon the heels of pleasure" might have adapted his line to Richard's case by saying "Joy treads upon the heels of grief."

CHAPTER XLIX.

"WHO EVER LOVED THAT LOVED NOT AT FIRST SIGHT?"

When an unselfish man is in the ecstasy of happiness, he invariably desires to make others happy also, especially those who are dear to him.

That afternoon Richard found himself approaching Geldamo cottage. Vida saw him and ran out to the gate to meet him. Her beaming face,

sparkling eyes, and bewitching, smiling mouth gave unmistakable evidence of the joy and pleasure his appearance excited.

"I am so glad you have come, dear, I wanted to see you so badly, and papa wishes to see you, too; he wants you to forgive him; he is very sorry and of course you will for my sake; won't you, darling?" and she glanced up at him so lovingly, so innocently, so tenderly, that, had she asked for his life, she might have received it at that moment.

"I have nothing to forgive, but have much for which I should ask forgiveness; for instance, for having dared to fall in love with you, my own sweet Vida."

"Now, I won't hear another word; we will quarrel; I forbid you to ever mention that subject again," and she raised a tiny finger, which she shook deprecatingly.

By this time they had reached the parlor, and Mr. Geldamo came forward and warmly welcomed him, and formally gave him his daughter's hand. There were mutual congratulations, mutual self-condemnations, mutual forgiveness, mutual happiness.

Richard remained all the afternoon, and was never so happy in his life. Vida sang and played and talked as only a woman in love can. And this was but the beginning of the many pleasant, happy days they enjoyed together. Before he left he told her about his change in fortune.

"Are you not pleased?" he asked, taking both her hands in his own.

"If it makes you any happier, I am, indeed, pleased, but I would not care for the wealth of the world unless it added to our mutual enjoyment. But I will tell you a great secret," and she looked very wise and demure. "I was not going to tell

you until—”(blushing) “until we”—(a rosier blush) “were——”

“Married,” smiled Richard, as he drew her lovingly to him, and reverently kissed her glowing cheek.

“Yes, I was going to keep it a secret until then, because I feared it would disturb you, but I don’t think it will now worry you, or make you feel badly. Now, listen, the secret is this: We are not as poor as papa at first thought we would be, and he has promised to buy us a nice house and furnish it comfortably, and then he proposes to have you and Paul go into business; and perhaps in time we may be able to rebuild the old home as it was formerly, and be all happy there together.”

Richard was unable to answer for some little time.

“I know not what to say, Vida, I have, indeed, suffered much, but I could endure the torture a hundred times were I certain it would end in such heavenly sunshine as this.”

“Why, Richard, how extravagant you are in expression; I don’t think you love me half as much as I do you, do you, darling?” and she nestled closer to him, and while her arms stole softly around his neck, an arch smile rippled o’er her features, and a roguish, merry twinkle glistened in her eye.

“Love you, Vida? Does the ship-wrecked mariner, in his frail tempest-tossed boat, love the sight of the rescuing sail? Even so do I love you, darling. What the mild rain is to the parched plant your love is to me; I love you with all the strength of a strong, passionate nature; with the tender, soft affection of a young mother for her first-born.”

“I know you do, Richard, and I am so happy.

I did not know how much I loved you until we parted at New Orleans. Those were cruel, long, long days. The yearning, longing desire to see you was so great that my heart ached until it was sore."

"There, there, Vida, never mind it now," said Richard, and, drawing her closer to him, he kissed away a tear that sparkled like a dew-drop on her fair, soft cheek.

"I know I am foolish to think of those days, but I can't help it sometimes." She then went to the piano and sang, in a very tender voice, a verse of the song beginning—

"I'd offer thee this hand of mine."

When she ceased Richard was visibly affected. Going up to her, he gently stroked her hair, and said :

"Vida, I will never forget that night. What was a hope before, that evening became a conviction. I knew then that you loved me."

"And you did not discover it before?" and she glanced at him reprovingly, and tried to look a little displeased ; "but when did you first love *me*?" she asked, as the affected frown melted away as he gazed at her with laughing eyes.

"The day we met in the tower chamber—and you, darling?"

"How provoking you are, Richard ; you know the lines of our lives crossed that day."

"Yes, Vida, that was our day of destiny ; but I must go now, love," and he arose to depart. When he had donned his overcoat and was standing near the hall door, Vida said, gravely :

"Richard, I want to ask you a question."

"Why, certainly ; nothing serious I hope ?"

"Very serious, Richard."

“ But what is it, dear ? ”

“ I’ll whisper it in your ear, for it is a very grave matter,” and as he bent his head she asked in a low, sweet, tender voice :

“ Who loves you, darling ? ” And before he could recover from his surprise, she kissed him, darted away, and her merry, silvery laugh floated through the open door as he passed out. Before he reached the gate, she called him, and when he returned she asked when he had heard from Bertha.

“ I had a letter from her this morning ; but that reminds me of a question I wanted to ask—where is Paul ? ”

“ Could you not guess ? ” she asked, by way of answering ; but she smiled so archly and looked so mischievously, that Richard responded promptly :

“ At Elgin.”

“ How shrewd you are ! I have had a long letter from Bertha, and I am dying to see her, and am going down as soon as Paul returns ; but I will only stay over night ; that’s why I called you back ; I wanted to tell you, as I may go any day.”

Richard was now almost a daily visitor at Geldamo cottage. Time flew quickly, unheedingly by, and the course of love flowed smoothly and grew stronger as the days rolled speedily into weeks and months.

The new year came, and Richard and Vida, Paul and Bertha were married. A quiet double wedding took place at the cottage. A short tour east, and the happy couples returned and settled down to the unromantic realities of every-day life.

Paul Geldamo and Richard Arbyght formed a partnership, each investing fifty thousand dollars. They are manufacturers of a staple article of commerce, and employ over three hundred mechanics.

After the firm had been in existence and in active operation for a period of six months, the men were called together, on a pay-day, and after they had assembled, Arbyght addressed them substantially as follows :

“Fellow-workmen, it is now six months since these works were formally opened. You are doubtless aware that there has been invested one hundred thousand dollars in the business, which, as you know, has been conducted under the personal supervision of Mr. Geldamo and myself. We have devoted to it our time, energy and labor. Thanks to your skill and care, our work, owing to its superior merit, has found a ready sale. The business has been quite profitable, not as much so, however, as we expect it to be in the future. After deducting from the profits a sum equal to a reasonable and just rate of interest on the money invested, the cost of insurance and taxes, the salary of Mr. Geldamo and myself, which we have fixed at three thousand per annum, and an amount to cover the probable depreciation of the machinery and buildings, owing to natural wear and decay, there remains a surplus which divided equally among the men employed will give to each of you about forty-five dollars. This amount we propose to now pay you. We have, however, this suggestion to make : that you place this first installment of profit in the hands of trustees, to be named by yourselves, as a fund for the purpose of aiding those of your number who may, either by sickness or accident, need assistance ; and, secondly, for the purpose of establishing a library and a reading and lecture-room ; and from subsequent profits you can deduct such an amount only as will be found necessary by experience to successfully carry out these objects.”

To these suggestions the men readily acceded. During the ensuing six months not only did production increase, but the quality of the goods manufactured was considerably improved. Each man felt that he had a direct interest in the business, and manifested therein the same interest and care that he would were the business wholly his own. The result was that at the end of the next six months the surplus of profit to be divided between the workmen was fifty per cent. greater than at the end of the first six months. During the succeeding six months the increase was still greater. The men now insisted that the compensation of the employers should be raised a thousand dollars per annum.

At the end of two years, however, it was found that, owing to commercial and business depression, the profits were barely sufficient to meet the expenses. As soon as the men were informed of this fact, they, of their own volition, agreed to accept a reduction in wages until such time as business again revived, which revival occurred during the ensuing year, when the former scale of wages was again restored.

At present the men in this establishment work but eight hours per day. Every six months all profits, after deducting the expenses as above specified, are divided among the men. These profits are steadily increasing, and the men are becoming more intelligent, more skillful, more productive, more industrious than the workmen of any other establishment in the city. Tom Castaway is the superintendent of these works and is the same genial, large-hearted, charitable man he was when we first made his acquaintance. The men respect and revere him, for his conduct toward them is always pleasant, kind and courteous.

The winter after Richard's marriage passed, spring and summer came and went, and autumn again came 'round. As he returned home one evening, Vida met him with a lovely smile, but there were tears in her eyes.

"What is it, love?" he asked in alarm.

"Poor Mary—I am so glad too, but here, read the letter yourself, I know you will be glad to hear from Oscar."

Richard took the letter, which proved to be long, and full of love and affection. At the end he found this postscript:

P. S.—*Next Tuesday is the anniversary of Amy's death, and Oscar and I are going to strew the grave with wild prairie flowers. We will take the baby along too. It is four weeks old now, and is the dearest, sweetest little piece of humanity you ever saw. We called it Amy. It looks just as she looked when I first saw her. Poor Amy! I often wonder if she is not continually hovering near us, she loved us so well.*

M. W.

But little remains to be told. Spindle forfeited bail and fled. Miller died of *mania-a-potu*, remorse of conscience having driven him deeper into hopeless inebriation. Cassie Miller is the adopted child of Richard Arbyght. Mellen left the city, and report says the country. Sergeant Soolfire was liberally rewarded by Arbyght, and is ever his staunch and true friend. Mr. Fargoood prospers and is loved and respected by his men. Unionism flourishes in the city, and through its agency workingmen are fast becoming more thoughtful, more industrious, more temperate, and are making rapid strides in mental and moral worth and social elevation.

And now the last scene closes, and as we make our obeisance, we fancy we hear the applause of some, the hisses of others, and finally we imagine we see the silent, thoughtful faces of many as the curtain drops.

THE END.

ROWEN.

MONDAY EVENING.

MY DEAR ARBYGHT:

During the last hour I have revolved very seriously in my mind the subject-matter of our conversation this afternoon. I think your assertion that strikes are a relic of barbarism is not strictly true, though popularly so regarded. A "relic" means that which is left or remains after loss or decay of the rest. While the wage-system continues there is almost too much of the body of social barbarism left to justify the use of the expression; but aside from that, I am inclined to believe that strikes are the result of existing barbarous conditions, and even this seems paradoxical, for they are unknown except in civilized countries. Perhaps it would be more correct to say they are one of the social forces, which must exist until the "struggle of classes" ceases, or becomes as feeble as it can be made by education and the evolution of mankind toward better conditions. M. Guizot, as statesman, sought to give such a gloss to the facts of history as would countenance the political acts and designs of his royal master, Louis Phillippe; but, as historian, he was forced to admit, in his "History of Civilization," "that the struggle of classes constitutes the very fact of modern history, of which it is full. Modern history," he says, "indeed, is born of this struggle between the different classes of society." Modern history means the liberty and freedom we now enjoy, and which was born of the struggle of classes—it is the heritage of the trade unionists, peasants, and burghers of Europe. The organizations of labor, the guilds or trade unions are as old, in origin, as the struggle of classes itself. De Cassagnac says they existed in Syria over fourteen hundred years before the birth of Christ; they existed in the reign of Solomon, as is clearly shown in the eighth book of the history of Flavius Josephus; they existed among the Greeks from the time of Theseus and among the Romans from the time of Numa. After the Augustan period Roman history is full and explicit upon the subject of trade or labor organizations, or guilds. But there were no such organizations during the so-called Dark Ages. When Roman civilization was overturned and submerged by the Goths, Vandals, and Quadi, in the fifth century, trade unions or guilds disappeared and were not again heard of until humanity, as Vico would express it, "returned upon itself," seven centuries later. Upon the advent of barbarism and ignorance, these organizations vanished and did not appear until humanity returned upon itself and civilization again dawned upon society. They are an adjunct of intellectual and material progress, and are found only in civilized communities.

Your friend,

TOM CASTAWAY.

